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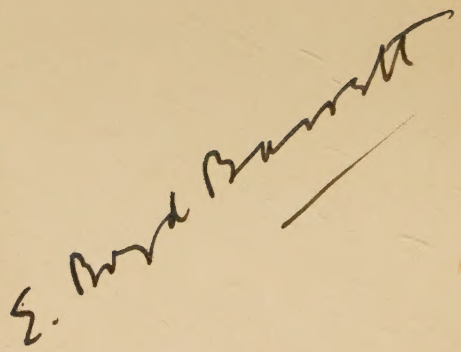

THE MAGNIFICENT ILLUSION

THE MAGNIFICENT ILLUSION

By

E. BOYD BARRETT

Author of While Peter Sleeps,
The Jesuit Enigma, *etc.*

New York
IVES WASHBURN
1930

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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THE MAGNIFICENT ILLUSION

CHAPTER I

ENCHANTMENT

SIX miles to the south of Dublin where the land mounts from a grey-green sea to gorse-clad hills, lies the port of Dunlaoghaire. Like a woman worn and staid, she broods over a broad and lovely bay, enclosed on the east by Howth, a gigantic mouse, with a tapering tail. Her features are pale save for what colour comes from her terraces of houses painted brown and pink and blue, and her patches of shrubs and greeneries ensconced in snug parks. Her proudest ornament is the great parish church of St. Michael's, visible for miles out to sea, that rules benevolently over a peace-loving, unimaginative community.

From the sea front two long arms of granite reach for a mile into the bosom of the bay. White and lean, they almost join at the finger-tips about a spacious harbour where rest at anchor coal boats, fishing smacks, and yachts. Against the granite piers the water beats chill and clear. White gulls without number float above, filling the air with harsh cries.

The drifting smoke of passing steamers stains them with shadows, while from their edges boys fish for pollock and bream. In summer, invalids in bath chairs are wheeled along the level surfaces of the piers, to watch the white sails of the "water-wags" gliding swiftly about the harbour. On fine evenings in the warm months the townsfolk promenade on the piers to listen to the band and to admire the crimson effects of the sunset on the sea. Then should it happen that the brown-sailed herring boats make for the harbour mouth, receiving as they pass the old pier-head lights, the blessing of kindly rays, while the songs of the fisher-crews are borne over the waters, a glow of loveliness settles for a moment upon the worn features of Dunlaoghaire.

Each morning, a few minutes before ten o'clock, the bell of St. Michael's summons the townsfolk to mass. Men, women and children hasten to obey its call, and soon every pew is filled. Only when mass is over does the social and business life of the town begin. Then young folk hurry to school, or if it be holiday time to playgrounds and bathing places. Busy housewives throng the shops. Municipal offices open, and the "noise of life" sets in. Hawkers of vegetables and fish start their daily rounds raising challenging cries to doors and windows as they pass. In

rivalry they outcry one another with clamorous shouts. Well I remember a fishwife Maggie who followed on the heels of her rival Mary "mocking" at her. While Mary cried: "Fresh herrings, all alive with their eyes open," Maggie responded: "Mine's the same as Mary's, only better; mine's the same as Mary's, only better!"

The interior of St. Michael's partakes of the general sedate atmosphere of Dunlaoghaire. Almost large enough to be a cathedral, it is angular, bare, and undevotional. The pews are plain and solid; the sanctuary is high and bleak; and everywhere the light is garish. But St. Michael's was, and still is, dear to the hearts of the faithful parishioners—all the more so for an ancient statue that stands on a pedestal to the left of the main altar. The statue is a noble and motherly madonna, clothed in a blue mantle, with a crown of gold. Forty years have not sufficed to efface from my memory a single fold of the mantle with its ornamental stars. When as a child kneeling by my mother's side, I looked up into the sweet face of the Blessed Virgin, her eyes seemed to meet mine affectionately, and I used to feel that she knew me and valued my love. The holiest spot in all the world was, as I thought, at the feet of this statue, and it was there, when the time came, that I elected to make my First Communion.

Above the harbour, a mile inland, my home, called

Terracina, was situated. It was a large red-brick house with chestnut trees and elders in front and a gravelled drive. There were outhouses at each side and a large garden in the rear. The rooms were lofty with fine marble mantelpieces, and furnished in old mahogany. There were portraits and busts and a library of classical books, gathered by my grandfather who, by profession a lawyer, was a distinguished scholar. In the garden there were fruit trees, rockeries, glass houses for flowers, and a lawn for tennis. A respectable chestnut horse, in the care of a coachman, occupied a stable and enjoyed the privilege of carrying the family to Dublin on shopping expeditions. Ring-doves in cages hung in a porch, while a duck and drake, long-lived and inseparable, wandered about in untiring search for slugs; and a pet donkey, my special possession, grazed at large. Curious was the medley of sounds that arose when as used to happen every Tuesday morning a German band in Prussian blue bivouacked in front of the house, making heaven and earth tremble to their brass instruments. Then the donkey brayed, the chestnut neighed, the duck quacked and the doves cooed. The rumpus was prolonged even after the Germans departed, for my brothers and I used to possess ourselves of brass candlesticks and putting them to our lips march around the house emulating with unutterable groanings the sounds that we had heard.

It may not be easy for a young widow, without any knowledge of business, and with a disposition at once romantic and pious, to face life with three young sons and a delicate mother upon her hands, but such was the task that confronted the sweet and gentle lady who found herself mistress of Terracina at the age of twenty-two.

Her husband (my father), who had always been delicate, and who though a barrister-at-law had never practised, died four years after marriage, leaving her very well provided for, but an easy prey to business sharks and family lawyers. She was, however, in no way overawed by the difficult duty of managing aright her affairs. She found a ready solution for all the problems of life by denying their existence and making of the day's work a delightful play-reaction. In her wonderland she was happy, devoted, and intermittently industrious. Whether she prayed, and much she prayed, or worked with knitting needles or pruning knives, which was not very often, it was always with her a joyous game. Though more an elder sister than a mother, she was in many respects a perfect mother. She played the piano and at times the guitar; she spent an hour each day combing the rich and glossy black hair that hung to her waist. She read novels often and liked to entertain family friends and priests. A few times in her young widowhood men fell at her knees begging her to marry them, for she

was very beautiful. Always she refused with a whimsical smile. She liked better to be mistress of Terracina, which queenship she thought would last forever, than to be trammelled by a husband's interferences.

In the afternoon or evening, but at a different hour each day, for she followed no routine, with a big prayer book full of pious pictures in her hand she knelt on a dark green sofa with her head resting against the panel of a door. This corner, where mother used to kneel, was called by us "Amen Corner." When she had mounted to her place I invariably ran to her and snuggled in between her and the end of the sofa. There I learned to pray and to find sweetness in it. My love for her became part of my own piety. I selected from her prayer book favourite pictures, kissed them, and read as well as I could the prayers that were printed on them. Then heaven was nigh and angels were hovering round. As mother prayed an expression of great fervour came into her face, and unconsciously her dear head pressed tighter against the panel of the door. Gradually it became discoloured and scratched with her hairpins. Long years after we left Terracina I returned to visit it. Strangers were living there but they allowed me to enter this room in search of Amen Corner. The door had been painted anew but under the paint I could see clearly marked traces of mother's hairpins. The strangers wondered why I stared with tears in my

eyes at the door panel.

I had two brothers, both older than myself, Charlie and Joe. The former was dark, delicate and sensitive. He was handsome and much to mother's disapproval inclined to seize opportunities of talking to girls. He read a good deal, and cared less about games and swimming than Joe and myself. Joe was fair, stubborn and adventurous. He was often in scrapes, and piety did not appeal to him much. At night prayers he often forgot to answer and occasionally he shirked going to week-day mass. He liked companionship and games of every kind. He made me his chum.

Being the most impressionable of the three, piety gripped me more profoundly than it did the others. To be good in my eyes was to be wise and happy, and it meant also pleasing my mother. The little altar of the Blessed Virgin which she set up in my room was my constant care. I kept alight for six years a little red lamp before the statue, and hardly ever failed to have nice flowers in the vases that stood on each side. I used to kiss the statue many times a day and then pray fervently on my knees that the Blessed Virgin would make mother rich and keep "us all" holy. When I began to read about saints and their scourgings, I made a cruel little instrument of torture, a cord with a hard chestnut at the end, and with this I would at night whip my bare shoulders.

We had been taught by my mother to be kind to the poor and it fell to my lot to take an interest in a poor widow, a Mrs. Dunne, who used to come to the kitchen door to beg. Every week I saved a few pennies for her, and when I grew a little older I used to call and see her at her tiny hovel. The fear of her life was that she might be taken away from this "home" and put in a workhouse. Against this she prayed day and night . . . and I could not understand why it was that the prayer of "poor Mrs. Dunne" was not heard. She fell ill and the municipal authorities had her carried away to the workhouse hospital where she died. There, I saw her emaciated corpse wrapped in paper, lying in a cheap wooden box. For years afterwards I used to feel a deep sense of sadness when I found myself in the region of the gloomy workhouse where the poor woman had died.

My brother Joe was, as I have said, adventurous. On days when the wind was high he would climb, with me in his wake, to the high chimneys of our house or to the topmost branch of "the big tree" in the garden. A storm at sea drew us at once to the pierheads, or if by good fortune there was a wreck in the vicinity we were sure to be there. Once we had the thrilling experience of assisting at the landing of a crew in a great storm. Coast guards had fired rockets over the rigging of the ship that was being driven in and a rescue basket fixed on ropes was attached to a mast.

The waves ran high and the ship was smashing time and again against the rocks. Everything was staged for a dramatic rescue. The first cage that was hauled in contained a little boy. A wild cheer went up to greet his safe landing. Again and again the cage went and came, each journey brought ashore another member of the crew. At last it was the skipper's turn to come. But there was no sign of his getting into the cage. The guards shouted and called but it seemed in vain. Joe and I thought he had resolved to die in his fast sinking ship. We remembered the old song:

"I'll stick to the ship, Boys,
You save your lives,
I've no one to love me . . ."

But he appeared at last, making his way with difficulty to the cage. Slowly he climbed in, but all the more willing were the strong arms that hauled him ashore. A lusty shout went up when the cage was landed. People crowded round and helped him to his feet. To our surprise he staggered. Then he staggered again, and the shameful truth dawned upon us that our fancied hero was drunk. It was a sad disillusionment for Joe and me.

One day we discovered in an old chest a holster pistol, together with powder flask and a bullet mould. We drew lots as to who was to fire the pistol first and it fell to me. Quickly we set about melting lead out

from the roof, and moulding bullets. We filled the pistol with powder and fixed a piece of sulphur as a cap. Armed with the pistol I sallied into the garden. By chance a chaffinch was perched on a bough of a tree near by, and I took aim and fired. A terrible explosion followed and my arm was almost jerked off. When the smoke had cleared away I looked for the chaffinch. The bullet had swept away his body completely but his poor little legs were still clutching the twig on which he had been resting. I realized I had done something cruel, and felt frightened and ashamed.

Joe was very keen about acting, and loved to stage plays with the sitting-room as theatre. The two old servants were induced by threats or coaxing to be present as audience. When they arrived we were already seated at a table with blackened faces and false moustaches, quaffing red wine (or rather water out of red glasses), as we threw dice on a table for stakes the height of which was suggested by the altitude of the piles of checker pieces. A quarrel would presently ensue. Swords would be drawn, and the table overturned. Here at times there would come tantalizing interruptions: "Don't break the chair, Master Jack"; or, "You'll hurt the child, Master Joe." In spite of the interruptions we would, however, continue the duel, until one or other of us fell wounded to the ground to make a dying speech. Then the cur-

tain, a red cloth of large dimensions, was pulled down mysteriously, and the drama was over.

As a change from acting we used at times to make orations at each other, according to the fashion of Members of Parliament. With hands full of notes, and impassioned gestures, we declaimed to "Mr. Speaker" on Home Rule for Ireland. The other "member" was allowed only to "hear! hear!" or clap his hands. All was deadly serious; to laugh was to offend. We believed profoundly in power of eloquence to sway the world, and it pleased us to feel that we were orators.

Mother often entrusted to me more or less complicated bits of business and gave me credit for being very wise and careful in such matters. She delighted to hear from the gardener how well I could mow the lawn with a scythe, or from some painter or carpenter who came to work on a job, "what a fine little man" I was, and how clever I was with a brush or a hammer. At games of skill, such as chess or whist, I was well able to hold my own with grown-ups and some native quickness of reaction gave me an advantage over my brothers at games. The praise I used to receive for such accomplishments gave rise in my mind to the conviction that I was competent, and no doubt made me prematurely sure of myself.

Meanwhile Joe was growing independent in a way that was perhaps healthier, for he put less value on

the sayings and judgment of grown-ups and holy people. Priests and nuns were not so quick to praise him, and he sensed the relative value of their praise. Joe did not take advice too easily or suffer interfering folk to tell him what to do. He sensed the importance of keeping people at arm's length, and thought things out for himself. He laid the foundation of becoming something of a leader, the while he enjoyed life all the more for being carefree.

At Terracina we had little or no experience of the tragic realities of life. Romanticism and religion without admixture of selfishness, and affection for one another was the atmosphere in which we lived. Everything was cleanly and purely on the level. There was no distrust of one another: no experience of deceit or dishonour. Mother was a sister, a child like ourselves; impractical, impulsive, idealizing. Because we loved her we accepted her outlook as perfect and we assimilated it unresistingly. Had the curious eye of a cynic glanced through the windows of our home and watched the elfish game that was our life, his lip would have curved contemptuously: "What a box of toys!" he would have sneered.

None the less disappointments obtruded themselves at times. Such was the disappointment I experienced on the occasion of my First Communion. I had grown to expect something wonderful, some supreme ecstasy. For years I had awaited the great day. For

months I had prepared for it, perhaps more seriously and thoughtfully than most boys. I had a good understanding of what it meant; the consuming of the body and blood of Christ; close union with the Ineffable! I had kept my soul white as snow, and I had learned to love my religious duties. I approached the altar rails with the deepest reverence . . . *and nothing happened!* It was just a completely dry and commonplace experience. I had given all and I seemed to get nothing! Nay, I got less than nothing, for presently a cruel spiritual shadow overwhelmed me.

On leaving the chapel to return home a slight shower of rain fell. A drop touched my lips. In my nervousness I thought the particle of water on my lip was a piece of the sacred host still remaining. I did not know what to do, so I touched it with my finger and swallowed it. At once I conceived the idea that I had committed an act of sacrilege, namely, that of touching the Host with unconsecrated hands. I was filled with misery and shame. I had sinned . . . and that mortally! There was no joy for me in the congratulations of my friends or the presents I received, or in the exquisite breakfast that my mother had ready waiting for me. For days I thought only of confession and of ridding my soul of my terrible first sin. Unfortunately Father Byrne, my confessor, was away on holidays. I went to the parish priest to make my

confession. "Father," I began, "I made a bad First Communion!" He looked down at me, through the grating of the confessional, in a perfectly uninterested way. "Who is your confessor?" he asked. "Father Byrne," I said. "Well, wait till he comes back from his vacation!" And so for a few weeks longer I had to bear the burden of my hidden shame.

When Father Byrne came back I told him my story, and with a few kind words he put things straight. He showed how mine was only a foolish fear and no sin at all, and in the gentlest way possible he lit again the lamp of spiritual happiness in my soul. Henceforward communion began to mean much to me and I went as frequently to the altar as I was allowed. Very quickly I learned to draw strength and joy from these very tender reunions with my Saviour.

Priests often came to Terracina and they were always received with the utmost respect and with such hospitality as my mother could afford. I used to look up to them with awe and wonder, thinking within myself "It must be hard to be a priest . . . to be so holy . . . so learned . . . so unselfish!" Once I heard a sermon preached about a young missioner who had been slain by savages whom he was trying to convert. He had been struck by a javelin while saying mass and his own blood had spurted from his breast into the chalice he was consecrating. This he offered, as he was dying, to God for pardon for his murderers. The

story affected me profoundly. I visualized the missioner as dark, young, handsome. It seemed to me fitting that a saint should be as fair of body as of soul; indeed, I thought all priests should be young and handsome, and was vaguely puzzled that so few of them were. With my brothers, I would kneel down when a priest's visit was over, to receive his blessing, and thought it wonderful to be blessed by a priest. No doubt mother hoped that through contact with priests we should somehow assimilate the idea of becoming priests ourselves—"if it were God's holy will"—as she used to say.

There was a growing shadow of trouble at home as the years rolled on. Mother was, as I said, an easy prey to business sharks, and the inevitable happened. Her money began to run short, and the paying of bills became increasingly difficult for her. We began to sense that something untoward was afoot although we did not understand. As long as she could she kept her trouble from us. But imperious knocks on the hall door grew more frequent. We used to hear the old servant saying: "The missus is out, but she left word to say that she'd settle your account at the end of the month." Angry grunts of dissatisfaction would follow and the door would be slammed. We were all the more surprised on such occasions because we knew *that mother was in.*

Prayers began to be said aloud by mother for "a

special intention," and we guessed that the intention was that lots of money would come from some unexpected quarter. It was the first pain of mind I felt, this sense of mother's trouble. It was my first contact, real though indirect, with the bed-rock fact of life, the economic law. That cruel law yielded in no way to the seduction of mother's gentleness and goodness! But there was God to fall back on, and I prayed hard and frequently for the miracle that never happened—the turning of sighs into sovereigns!

Of my own I had a little "savings bank." It was a secret drawer in a desk mother had given me. She and I alone knew the trick of opening this drawer. At the time, I was about ten years old and I had five sovereigns (twenty-five dollars) saved in my bank. One day I found mother crying and thinking that she was upset about not having money I ran to my "secret drawer" and taking all the money I had, brought it to her. She threw her arms around my neck and kissed me, but told me to put back my little hoard again in safety. The next time I opened the drawer there was another gold piece added to my store.

My brothers and I received our early schooling from an old-fashioned, dignified "pedagogue" who used to come to our house for three and a half hours daily. He was pompous, but competent. What he taught he taught well and wisely. He won and held

our respect. We learned a little of everything, from Greek to algebra. His method was to proceed, one step at a time, without pressure or haste. He enjoyed teaching as he did his daily lunch which consisted of bread and cheese, a chop, and a glass of beer which he consumed in our presence. Crumbs of bread used to gather on his bushy whiskers, and fall on his silk-lapelled coat. With lordly gesture he disencumbered his person of the crumbs. Meanwhile he kept an eye to it that we studied our lessons. Often he drew our attention to a fire screen in the room on which was depicted a fox hunt. The hunters, led by the master, were facing a difficult hedge. The master, on a strong chestnut, was a large bewhiskered man (like our teacher) and his manner of approaching the hedge was pointed out to us, with unvarying eulogy. Our teacher praised him as the best rider of the hunt: the rider with most skill and judgment. Somehow, there came into our minds the thought that Mr. Daniel L. Farrelly (our teacher) had at one time been a Master of the Hounds.

After ten o'clock mass in summer with boy friends we would "stroll down the town" on the way to the famous "Forty-foot" bathing place. Along the main street there was always something new or exciting. Besides the jaunting cars that clattered by, and the sandwich man with a placard in front bidding you *not* to read the placard he carried behind, and the peelers

(cops) dragging rowdies from the prison to the court-house, there were sailors and soldiers to be seen and doctors driving their rounds in open vis-à-vis. When we had pennies in our pockets we congregated round shops that sold foreign stamps, or fishing tackle, or more often round pastry and candy shops. "Jam tarts," "ginger nuts," "brown rock," and "lemon drops" were favourite purchases. Arrived at the Forty-foot we sat around watching trick diving and trick swimming. There were popular feats such as swimming under water and crawling about over the rocks, pretending to eat shells and seaweed. Only a few could attempt swallow dives or the "trudgeon" stroke in those days, but all could swim fairly well and dive without splashing or flopping. None wore bathing suits and only a very few took sun baths for the weather even in summer was far from tropical. The bigger boys, who could afford it, drank Guinness's stout before and after bathing, but the smaller boys were more than satisfied if they had candy or cake to eat.

In spite, however, of such slight contacts with life, the environment in which my brothers and I lived was in many ways narrow. We were allowed to associate with a few "nice" Catholic boys and to play cricket and hockey with them, but we were, by skilful manœuvring on the part of mother, kept apart from companionship with girls of our own age, and

from boys who did not belong to our faith. We came to feel pity for non-Catholics, rather than to cherish any hard feelings against them. We did not think that they would go to hell, but we did think that their condition was perilous and miserable. We were given no instruction in art or history, and only a half-hearted attempt was made to teach us music. On the other hand, we were brought to places of great scenic and beauty, glens and rivers and mountains in the most picturesque of places, County Dublin, and we learned from our contact with the sea, to fish, boat-ing and swimming, to love the greatness and loneli-ness of nature. We were encouraged also to read good books such as the classic novels of Scott, Thack-eray, Eliot, and Dickens, but no really broadening or constructive inspiration was given us, nor had we, at least until we went to a public school, the least inkling as to the high social purpose of life.

Often in summer my brothers and I would set out to fish off the granite rocks of the east pier. There was a point from which we could see the Hill of Howth and watch the boats passing to or from the Liffey mouth. We spent long hours alert and active awaiting the sharp bites of the sand flats (flounders). One had to be quick to get them, and more often than not one was late, and had to draw in a line bereft of bait. While fishing we watched the clouds and the chang-ing colours of Howth head, and restless waves, as tire-

less as the rock-birds that hopped in and out of the crevices. When the afternoon drew on we began to cast wistful glances towards the point where the pier shot out from land, for we expected "someone" carrying a little basket. And mother would appear in the distance, in due time, sauntering slowly as it would seem, but none the less coming quickly. When she was near we ran to show what fish we had caught, and to tell her of "terrible bites" and sad mishaps, such as "losing hooks" and "nearly falling in." Together we sat on the rocks and the basket was opened . . . what bread and butter sandwiches! . . . what delightful jam tarts! Before we ate we said grace together: only Joe would sometimes take a bite before doing so.

Mother did not scrutinize men or motives. She attributed to all others her own high sense of honour. Trustful, and simple-hearted to her finger-tips, she found herself astonished and amazed when people failed to act honourably by her. She liked to believe that hers was a world of straight dealing and sincere sentiment and she could never uproot her belief, or perhaps had not the courage to attempt the task. Her weakness was her great desire to please those of whom she thought highly, and by so doing to merit their praise and good will. Following her ways of thinking and acting, we, her sons, adopted the same trustful attitude, the same anxiety to please, the same readiness to think everyone honourable and good. As

we grew to love her favourite flowers, the musk rose, azalia, pelargonium and mignonette, we adopted as the happiest and most beautiful her principles of conduct, even though they were destined to place us at a grave disadvantage in dealing with the cruel realities of life.

Once, only once, did mother allow herself to give free rein to her anger: it was the one occasion on which we three combined in staging a lie. We had been given a fine set of cricket things; bats, balls, wickets and pads. The next morning my eldest brother chanced to open the newspaper before mother came down to breakfast and he read on a headline: "Man killed playing cricket." At once he feared we should be told not to play, and that our grand present would be taken from us. He called Joe and me, showed us the headline and said he was going to hide the paper. He ran into an unused room and shutting his eyes threw the paper behind a cupboard. We saw what he did.

When mother came down she noticed the absence of the paper and asked Charlie where it was. Charlie blushed and said: "I don't know." Then she asked Joe and he answered the same way. She at once suspected that something unusual was afoot. Within a few minutes we became so frightened at the way mother looked at us that we thought it better to get the paper. Then mother grew deadly pale with anger.

Raising her voice she called us all to the kitchen where a big coal fire was burning. She sent Charlie for the box of cricket things, the present we were so proud of, and taking bats and balls one by one she threw them into the fire, watching the blaze with dilated eyes. When all were burned she turned on us scornfully and raising her voice once more warned us in the name of God never again to tell a lie.

Had she been severe of aspect, old, or even powerfully built, the scene would have been less trying, less terrible. But to see a young and beautiful woman, ever gentle, and graceful, glowering with rage, almost with hate, as her delicate hands cast the playthings into the fire, was too dramatic and tragic for words. Never could we, the guilty shamed ones, forget the scene.

Years rolled by quickly and happily, and at length the time came for going to school. Mother decided, after consulting priest friends, to send us to Clongowes Wood, a school which was in charge of the Jesuits, the foremost and oldest school in Ireland. It was a "boarding-school," which meant that boys lived there during the terms, returning home only for vacations. Mother well knew how lonely life would be during our absence but her affection for us and her idealism prompted her to make the sacrifice.

And so my wonderland of childhood comes to an end and the next stage of my life finds me at school,

among strange faces and voices, absorbed in new occupations, and yet lonely for thinking of a big red house, surrounded by green trees, where a pale, dark woman, still young and beautiful, gazes wistfully out the window towards a distant city, beyond which and still farther away are the three living treasures of her gentle soul—her three young sons.

The parting was very trying. It happened on the platform of the dreariest of railway stations, Kingsbridge, Dublin. A hundred boys or more were hurrying about. Trunks labelled "Clongowes Wood College" were piled up. Young priests, in polished silk hats, were politely moving from group to group of parents. There were no familiar faces for us, as we gathered round mother. We were excited, of course, at the prospect of going to school, but we were terribly frightened of the approaching parting. Then the signal whistle blew and we hugged mother and kissed her passionately. We fought for places at the carriage window as the train drew out of the station that we might have a last glimpse of her who had, up till now, been the centre of our lives.

CHAPTER II

AT SCHOOL

MY mother had moved up the platform with the train as it slowly gathered speed, and we were able to see her for a little longer. We continued waving to her while we could, delaying the cruel separation that the train was effecting. Then there was a curve in the rails and it was no longer possible to see even the depot. Sharply, like a pain, it came home to me that a big change had come into my life.

There were several boys in the compartment. Some of them were crying, some were sitting moody and sullen, with dry eyes, some were untying the parcels they carried. Seated in our midst was a priest with spectacles. We did not realize that he was there to take charge of us until he began to ask our names. He tried to interest us by speaking about Clongowes. Most of us were "new boys" and he supposed we were anxious to hear about school life. On the way he stood up, and pointing through a window of the compartment, tried to show us a distant view of Clon-

gowes but none of us could see it. We thought this queer.

The railway depot for Clongowes was called Sallins, and when we arrived there the "old boys" rushed from the train and began a violent scrimmage for the best jaunting cars, a long line of which was in waiting. There followed a wild and furious drive of five miles. The jarveys drove as fast as they could for they had hopes, if they got back in time to the depot, of capturing more fares. The drive was pretty. At one place we passed through a beech wood close to the river Liffey. It was September and the leaves were mellow-tinted. The driver flicked off some of them with his whip. We noticed herds of fat cattle in the fields, and conical heaps of hay compact and white. It was my first view of a farming county and I thought it beautiful.

Clongowes came in view at last. It had been a border fortress, and stood in a wooded plain. Its towers were high, strong and grey. The windows alone seemed modern. There was a chapel, also castellated, built close to one wing. There were ramparts, dikes, and a flag-staff; and it seemed, as it actually was, hundreds of years old. In front, as we approached, stood cars and drays with trunks, and a crowd of excited boys shaking hands with one another and with priests who moved about among them. Everyone seemed to know all the rest, but they were

all strangers to me and a feeling of loneliness came over me. But soon, with the others, I was hurried into a large hall for supper, which consisted of hot meat, potatoes, bread and tea.

There was noise and confusion everywhere that evening . . . hurrying, asking questions, going in wrong directions. I thought I should never learn to find my way about. To my astonishment I discovered that there were three "lines," or divisions. I was placed in the *third line*, among the small boys; my brothers were in the next line, the *lower line;* the *higher line* was for the big boys. Some of these seemed to me to be men, they were so tall. Besides, one of them actually had a big moustache. I couldn't understand why a man with a moustache should be at school.

There was a third line play-room and corridor where the small boys assembled after supper. The corridor was flagged with slate blocks, and seemed cold and gloomy; however, when the boys crowded on it, shouting and pushing, it lost its gloom. I watched the other boys playing. One of them, a sinewy country lad, rather taller than the rest, issued a challenge to all and sundry to a wrestling match. "I can give any of ye a fall," he said, and it was not long before he demonstrated his prowess. His arms were long and he was very strong; none could withstand him. The old boys didn't like this as he was a new-comer. Then

a hero appeared, a fat boy called George Lynch. He waddled up for a bout. His legs were thick and he was enormously heavy. The challenger tried in vain to throw him. Lynch was no sportsman, for he punched and clawed, but the crowd was with him. The country lad kept his temper, but to the delight of the old boys had to yield the palm to Lynch.

After recreation there were night prayers in the chapel. A priest read them from a rostrum behind the pews. He was nervous and his voice trembled. Some of the old boys, who didn't like him, tittered. I thought this was awful. I couldn't conceive how anyone could be disrespectful in the chapel. The prayers seemed long and strange and solemn. I couldn't understand them very well and felt frightened. When they were over we were herded to the dormitories to bed, each boy having assigned him a small alcove.

It was hard for me to sleep. The excitement and strangeness of everything unnerved me. I tossed on my bed and felt lonely. I wanted to be manly and I repressed my tears, but they were not far off. I was just a little fellow of eleven years, unaccustomed to anything like the barrack life of a boarding-school. I began to wonder what it would be like . . . and to think of mother, far away and alone. Suddenly, very quietly, the curtain of my alcove was drawn back a little, and a solemn but kindly face appeared. It was

the Jesuit in charge of my line. "Are you all right, Jack?" he asked. It meant a lot to me that he already knew my name and that he should be so good as to see after me. Still, it seemed queer to be "mothered" by a man. "Thanks, sir, I'm all right," I answered. He smiled and drew back the curtain again. Soon after I fell asleep.

I awoke early and waited a while in bed not knowing what to do. When was I to get up? Tired of waiting I dressed and made my way out of the dormitory on tip-toe. I found myself on a bleak landing at the head of an enormous stairway. I looked out a window and saw a great number of cricket and football fields; there was a veritable forest of white posts. Around the grounds there were enclosing woods and in the distance blue hills. I could see no houses anywhere, and the familiar morning sounds of milk cars rattling along streets were absent. I felt myself in a foreign country. I went back to my little alcove and ate a piece of the cake my mother had given me. After an interminable wait a bell rang and the noise of other boys getting out of bed, washing and splashing, filled the air.

The first day at school was full of exciting incidents. We were brought to a large study hall and the rules were read to us. We were questioned as to our studies and placed in various classes. We were shown the bounds beyond which we were not sup-

posed to go. Then each line went out to the playgrounds and cricket began. I found to my delight that I could "slog" even the best bowlers among the old boys. I saw the old boys looking on with surprise and annoyance. Then what I was wishing for happened. A boy came along, who said he was from "my place"; a boy called Pat Stanley, and he began to talk to me. It was something to have found a friend.

Next day school life began in earnest. Early mass and prayers; class; lunch; an interval for games; class again; dinner; games; and so on. The lesson time seemed frightfully long, and the recreation time very short. There were frequent visits to the chapel, and I was distressed to notice how indifferent and inattentive most of the boys were. They looked about, talked, and tittered. Once I laughed too, but couldn't help it. The boy in front of me suddenly discovered that there was a bumble-bee in his coat pocket. The bee was buzzing furiously. He began to thump his coat, but the more he did so the louder the bee buzzed. Presently other boys began to take notice of what was happening. Soon the tittering spread and the climax was only reached when the chapel prefect sent the boy with the bee in his coat out of the chapel.

The refectory where we repaired four times daily was dreadfully noisy and untidy. It was curious to sit on a hard bench while eating and to have to grab

one's food. I thought the other boys were selfish and rough. One of them, a robust fellow, who sat near me, caught hold of a waiter by the coat and shouted at him: "Scullion! Sarve me furst!" The other boys, entitled by their places to precedence, jeered at him and a quarrel ensued. Meanwhile a new boy by my side began to tell me his particular title to celebrity. I didn't understand its value at the time as my home was far removed from the land war. "My father shot a landlord," he was saying. "He escaped and they [the police] haven't been able to catch him." I thought it queer. That was all.

In class I found that the grounding, solid and sure, that I had received from my teacher at home made it easy for me to keep in or close to the front rank. Some of the boys were very clever; some dreadfully dumb. They were all up to tricks, some of which I thought mean, such as copying. If one worked hard he was called "a pound" by the rest, which was a term of contempt. It was not long before a kind of crisis arose which tested the boys' sense of honour, and courage. I looked upon it in that light in any case. There had been an angry dispute between two of the Jesuit masters. The boys all sided with one of them. He seemed to us clearly in the right. We decided to penalize the other master by staging a row in his class. At a certain point the row was to begin and the boys were to stamp with their feet. The time

for the row came and I started to stamp as I had promised but to my surprise none of the others followed suit. Then there was a sudden noise like a thunderclap. The master had swung his clenched fist against the blackboard and it jumped into the air. A roar followed. "Barrett, on your knees." As I rose to go to the centre of the room a stinging blow caught me in the ear. Death-like stillness followed. I could hear the boys breathing. Then the master, pale as death, in a hard cold voice, went on dictating lessons. The storm passed. I was frightened but felt no ill will against the master. But I could not understand why the other boys had not kept their promises and stamped their feet at the signal arranged on.

Soon after the beginning of the term the annual spiritual retreat began for the bigger boys. The small boys were brought out for walks each day. Through woods, over meadows, across hills and along turnip fields we went. We sliced turnips with our penknives and ate them with relish. We jumped dikes and tumbled down the sides of sand pits. One of the masters who accompanied us won our admiration by rolling down a very steep incline, through rocks and briars, blindfolded and with his hands tied to his sides. When he showed us that he could stand the pain of having his finger squeezed, as tight as we could squeeze it with a bicycle monkey wrench, our

esteem for him knew no bounds. Bit by bit we grew to like some of these strange "black-robes" who were so different from the rather staid priests we had known at home. We liked when they told us stories and played games with us. We liked too their gentlemanly ways, and the bright smiles they had for us when we obeyed rules.

The monotony of school life was broken by occasional "play days," "feeds" and entertainments. But it was the little incidents that happened to each boy, things a bit out of the ordinary, that made the deepest impressions, and gave his school experience its peculiar *genre*. Such incidents befell me as they befell others. Some kind of impulsiveness, usually, I think, generous in nature, was the source of most of the little troubles that befell me. One day, in class, a boy who had never been punished before (on account of the influence of his rich parents, it was whispered) was called out to be *pandied*. This punishment consisted of hand-slapping with a heavy leather strap. He, "Pussy" Ryan as he was called, was told to stand in the middle of the class while the dean, Father James Daly, dilated upon his idleness and general wickedness. As chance would have it, he stood close to where I was sitting. He seemed terribly frightened and impulsively I set about comforting him. "Pussy," I whispered, "they won't *soak*. Don't funk it." I was sincere in my attempt to give him

some courage, although in my heart I was glad that he should be made to undergo the things that other boys had to put up with. Suddenly, however, came a loud shout from the dean. "What is this I see?" he cried. "One boy, laughing at another poor boy who is going to be punished. Go back to your place, Ryan! Come out here, Barrett!" And without more ado he gave me forty hard pandies. I sensed that I had been made a scapegoat for the son of rich parents, but I took my punishment without complaint . . . above all without any sign of feeling it . . . which was a point of honour with the "decent" fellows. Then I said, "Thank you, sir!" when it was over, which was the Clongowes way of playing the game.

Once I saw a boy, "Cooly" Dolan was his name, a thin, delicate, nervous boy, stand up under a most ferocious and cruel lashing without the slightest sign of fear. The master was infuriated and apparently bent upon breaking his will. As each brutal blow fell there was just a slight spasmodic twitch on Cooly's lips. The lashing went on for an interminable time, but Cooly stood it like a hero to the end, upright and fearless. At last the master was exhausted and departed hurling a threat of further punishment. Cooly quietly, and very precisely, for he was that kind, wiped away the blood with his handkerchief, and disdained even to discuss the matter later. He was a boy of about thirteen years at the

time and had a wizened little face.

Some of the boys surprised me by their mature and worldly ways. I thought them hard-boiled and selfish, and could not reconcile their philosophy with the view of life that I had learned at home. Indeed, it was difficult for me to believe that any Clongowes boy could be really selfish at heart. My mind was more than befogged with idealistic dreams. Once my dream-bubble was rudely pricked by a boy friend of those days, now the distinguished writer, Francis Hackett, the author of the recent popular work on Henry VIII.

Hackett and I sat at the same desk in the study hall, although he was a class or two in advance of me. He was a clever, dour, sarcastic boy, studious but unpopular, for he never played games. One evening on reaching my place in the study hall I offered Frank some candy, for I saw that he had none of his own. He eyed me suspiciously for a moment and asked, "What are you offering me this for?" Then he added, "Don't you know that I will never give you any?" I told him that it didn't matter, so he took the candy and ate it with relish. He was true to his word about never offering me any in return. He did not envisage life as a good will game among friendly, generous folk as I did. Sentiment seemed to him at the time sheer nonsense.

On account of being good at games I was popular.

After a few months at Clongowes I was elected captain of my line, and had the task of keeping the games going at full pitch. But within a month or two, I experienced the fickleness of popularity, and the supreme misfortune of incurring a boycott. My crime was that I had taken the loan of another boy's cricket bat without leave, and it was true that I had done so. The circumstances were, however, a justification. It happened that the Jesuit prefect of the bigger boys had noticed that I was good at cricket and one day he called me to come and play against the best bowler of the school, a six-foot boy called Frank Christian. I had to bring a small bat with me, and in haste I seized the bat of a pal of mine, Dan Roche, knowing that he would not object. After half an hour I returned to my own line and was met by black looks. The word had gone round that I was to be boycotted . . . and for a couple of days none of the boys would speak to me. The only salutation I got was "You fecked Roche's bat! Soak it now!"

It was as though the end of the world had come. I was crushed and dumbfounded. For the first time since I entered Clongowes I shed bitter tears in my little alcove. Kneeling before my picture of the Blessed Virgin I prayed with all my heart that the terrible disgrace might be removed. The agony and shame were acute. I had always hated boycotts and had refused to join in them. Once when a boy was

boycotted for something he had said about me I had intervened and got the boycott removed. But now I was the object of hatred myself, and helpless. I was afraid that my brothers in the lower line would hear about it, and share in the disgrace. It was my first and bitterest lesson in the instability of social good will.

Before I was very long at Clongowes I came in contact with a personality, a Jesuit, who was destined to exercise an important influence upon my life. He was the prefect of the higher line and by far the best preacher in the school. Father Henry Fegan, "Tim" as he was nicknamed, was under medium size, thin, dark, and half-bald. He had bright penetrating eyes, a most expressive face, and an inexhaustible source of nervous energy. He was a great story-teller, a great actor, and a shrewd judge of character. In a sense he was a religious fanatic; in a sense a leader of men. He could arouse to boiling point the emotion of any audience that he addressed. He could be exceedingly witty, marvellously courtly in his manner, diabolically sarcastic and lavishly generous. He was keenly alive to every phase of boy psychology and could win boys to the state of almost worshipping him. He was in every sense an interesting character, attractive up to the point that one set about estimating his make-up in a cold-blooded, dispassionate way. Now he was "all for Christ"; now, "all for Clon-

gowes"; and again, "all for Ireland." He was very observant and before long he noticed my solemn earnestness in religion, and my transparent innocence. Probably he counted upon making a saint out of me, and he began to show me in various indirect ways that he had me in mind and that he expected great things from me. He used to find occasions to say a few kind words to me in order to win me to him. And he succeeded. For years he was my hero. When I fell ill, and had to be removed home to the care of my mother, he wrote letters to me every day full of nice stories, and fun, and piety. He came to see me when the doctor's report was despairing, and what a pleasant visit he made it, even though I was sick and weak to death! In truth he knew that I was at death's door and he came to prepare me for heaven. This he did with consummate art and gentleness. He even drew from me a kind of promise to give myself entirely to Christ whether I lived or died. He induced all the boys at Clongowes to join in prayer for me, and painted glowing accounts to them of my patience, resignation, and so forth. Death, however, did not come, and some months later I was back again at Clongowes trying now harder than ever to live up to the high ideals that Father Fegan had put into my mind. He still continued to watch over my religious development—and that in a way quite peculiar to himself.

One day, the memory remains vivid, I had been

chosen to play on the school eleven although I was still very young. I was in the dormitory, having changed into cricket clothes. Suddenly Father Fegan appeared. There was no one about. Like a father bidding adieu to his Benjamin, he threw his arms around me affectionately and whispered: "Jack dear, don't offend our dear Lord today by vanity." Tears rushed to my eyes as I promised that I should not. Then he told me to hurry after the others. The incident unnerved and upset me. When I reached the cricket field I was too disconcerted and discouraged to play well. Instead of thinking of the game, I was thinking about what Father Fegan had said to me, and of course the result was disastrous.

In the third year of my school life my brothers were prominent higher-liners. Charlie in particular was a brilliant Rugby footballer and was selected to play for the school fifteen against a visiting team. As was usual, all went to see the game. I was a little late and just as I arrived I noticed a sudden rush towards a part of the field where apparently the game had been stopped by the referee. The crowd was gathering around a player who had been hurt. With a tragic intuition I guessed it was Charlie. I rushed frantically towards the place and pushing my way in saw my brother lying limp upon the ground, pale as death, with his forearm twisted in a gruesome, unnatural way. Without hesitating a moment, I flung

myself on him and kissed him. "Charlie, Charlie, what's the matter?" I cried. He looked up and smiled faintly. Then Father Fegan caught me by the shoulder and told me to run to the infirmary and bid the nurse get a bed ready at once. I started up and ran panting to the infirmary. A few minutes later I saw a procession approaching, half a dozen of the big boys carrying my brother in. My terrified imagination made me think that he was dying, and it was not till an hour later, when his arm was set in splints, and he was sitting up in bed drinking tea and eating toast, that I felt completely reassured.

There was a considerable amount of "spooning," as mild love-making among boys at Clongowes was called. The pretty boys were called "tarts," and sentimental seniors wrote notes to them, sent them presents of candy and cherished their friendship. There was not a great deal of evil in it, though sometimes the *billets-doux* were passionate enough and led to expulsions. I thought it all dreadfully silly, and was surprised that tarts should put up with the attentions paid them. I never suspected that underlying it all there was vice. In accord with my way of putting the best possible interpretation on everything, I looked upon it as innocent, though silly foolery.

But it was, as I found out, a kind of foolery that could be revolting, almost tragic. It happened that one of the Jesuits had shown himself particularly nice

to me, and from time to time used to bring me out with him alone on walks. One day he led me to a natural arbour in a pretty wood. He read some poetry for me and started talking of friendship. After a while, to my astonishment and disgust, he threw his arms around me and kissed me. I broke free in amazement. Even then I did not suspect any passion or sin in him, but thought that some sudden loneliness had overcome him. He grew terribly embarrassed and made me promise to pray for him and not to say anything about what had happened. Shortly after he lent me a book on Greek art with drawings of nude figures which I tried studiously to avoid seeing while reading the book.

My carefulness in respect of modesty may perhaps be gauged from the fact which follows. During one of my school years the regular text-book of Latin poetry, which we used daily in class, had a picture in it which seemed sensuous. On opening the book for the first time I had noticed it. I felt that I should not look at it, even though the book had been put into the hands of every boy in the class by the Jesuit master. The year passed. Every day I carried the book to class to study it, yet never again did my eyes rest on the forbidden picture.

So careful was I about "purity of conscience" that I confessed even such seeming faults as "taking much pleasure in eating." My confessor, the holiest priest

in the school, was probably rather proud to have a boy penitent who was so delicately minded as to confess such a fault. Anyhow he kept me a long time in the confessional explaining that pleasure in eating, while a natural thing and not a sin in itself, could nevertheless become excessive. He added stories about boy saints who were "tempted" in this way, and encouraged me to mortify my appetite in eating, which indeed I was already doing.

It was during my second year at Clongowes that my "vocation"—my *call* to the priesthood—took definite shape. It happened during the spiritual retreat, a three days' period of silence, special sermons and pious reading. A Jesuit missioner, Father Tom Murphy, gave the retreat. He was tall, dark, ascetic looking. He spoke clearly and interestingly, telling dramatic stories with tremendous effect. He explained in a series of sermons that life is vain, that riches, pleasures, honour fail to satisfy the human heart. Happiness was to be found only in loving and serving God. "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world if he suffer the loss of his soul?" My heart, ripe for conviction, was thoroughly convinced and it was an easy conclusion for me that the right, *the only thing* for me to do was to give my life to the service of God as a Jesuit. My vocation was thus irrevocably fixed at the age of thirteen.

During the retreat, after the sermons, the majority

of the boys would rush to find comfortable seats in the play-room or in the grounds, and pass their time eating candy and cutting up sticks. I used, however, to find a quiet place in a distant part of a cricket field, and setting myself a path, walk up and down as I had seen the priests do, meditating seriously. I would go over again and again in my mind the points of the sermons, so as to hammer home more and more strongly my convictions. Then I came to see how great and precious a grace is a vocation . . . this special spiritual call to serve God . . . and I made up my mind to guard with all care to the death my "pearl of great price."

Religion permeated my life. When walking in file along corridors with other boys, going from one duty to another, my eyes invariably searched for and found a crucifix or the face of a saint on which to rest. Every step I took up the high pinewood stairs to the study hall I uttered a brief prayer. In my alcove in the dormitory, at my desk in the class-room, I had pious pictures so fixed that I could not but see them. Often during evening recreations I stole away to visit the spiritual father to hear words of advice and comfort from him. I felt that the community depended upon me to give a good example to the other boys: in a sense I had more power for good than they, and I exerted it to the full, and yet I despised as much as any boy that form of hypocrisy called "priggish-

ness."

Some of the religious ceremonies in the school were both spectacular and beautiful. The outstanding one, and in a way the most important, was the public reception of new members into the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin. Only the very best of the big boys were voted into this sodality, and it was the unwritten code that every sodalist should give good example. The reception of new members was very impressive. At early mass, on a bright May morning, when there was already a great variety of simple flowers with which to decorate the altar, the new members were summoned to kneel before the tabernacle, inside the rails. They were attired in their best clothes, wore white ties and gloves, and carried round their necks, hung from blue ribbons, large silver medals. The blaze of lights threw a glory about their innocent young faces, and their voices quavered as they read aloud in unison the declaration of their tender devotion to Mary and their chivalrous attachment to her cause. . . "We will never depart," they said, "either by word or action from the duty we owe you." With reverence they received communion after making their simple and beautiful promises. They felt thereafter enrolled in a special company whose purpose it was to honour the Mother of God. The boy head, or prefect, of this sodality was supposed to be blameless and of unsullied honour. Usually his term lasted

one year; his last year at Clongowes. My term as prefect extended over my two last school years.

Though sensitive and impulsive by nature, there was some form of imperturbability in my character that revealed itself on one memorable and exciting occasion. It was during a public examination that was held in the refectory at Clongowes that had been adapted to meet the requirements of the State Board. About a hundred boys were writing their answers under the supervision of a Protestant clergyman and two extern professors. The tension was high, as large prizes were in competition. It was midsummer, a sultry, damp day, and half-way through the examination a storm burst. The thunder-claps were terrific and they followed on the heels of the lightning. Nearer and nearer approached the storm. It was hard to write with hands that trembled. It was hard to collect one's thoughts and to avoid making bad mistakes. The superintendents walked about uneasily, affecting indifference to what was threatening. Many of the boys grew deadly pale and sighed. Some of them blessed themselves openly and prayed. Meanwhile the sky darkened to blackness; crash followed crash in quick succession. The great windows shook; the walls even seemed to vibrate, and the desks trembled. Boys began to clutch their chairs making ready for a wild stampede. At last came the culminating crash. A huge ball of fire seemed to explode

with instant deafening thunder in the hall. A terrifying, universal cry arose, and headed by the superintendents the boys tore madly through the hall overturning the desks and spilling ink on papers and floor.

I had felt the common nervousness while the storm was approaching but the great ball of fire, the last terrific explosion, left me cold and unmoved. I looked round and saw one boy, a chum of mine who had very long legs, making frantic efforts to extricate himself from his desk; I saw another, who was expected to win a first place, knocking a pot of ink over his papers as he escaped. Finally I found myself alone in the hall, with my pen still in my hand, wondering why such a panic had seized the rest. It was only later in the evening, when I heard that a bolt had struck a castle turret and had torn away huge blocks of stone that I realized how imminent the danger had been.

My day of days at Clongowes was, as it is with most boys, bound up in the fortunes of a great game. To win a debate medal or a special prize, or to be elected by schoolfellows to an office of dignity, are little things compared with taking part in a decisive victory over a rival school. In such a victory one feels surging through one the strength and desire of one's fellows; one feels an intimate contact with the destiny that shapes what is to be. It was my first ex-

perience of being the active instrument of a cause . . . of having as it were the future in my hands, and many depending upon me.

The rival school was Castleknock, a fine old Dublin institution, but more modern in spirit and less snobbish than Clongowes. Truth to say, Clongowes for years had avoided meeting Castleknock on the cricket field, fearing, it was whispered, defeat and disgrace, for it had long boasted of its pre-eminence in this line. At length there came to Clongowes a more sportsman-like Jesuit Superior, and the game was arranged.

It was a glorious day, sunny and dry. The Clongowes grounds looked very beautiful and we felt proud of the old school. Eleven of us, the team, had a special breakfast, and then we went up to the castle to meet the visiting team. They were nice fellows, but a few of them were grown men while we were only boys. They looked keen and smart and we guessed that the contest would be close. Cricket, more than any other game, is one of morale. If morale gives way an utter collapse sets in, with shame and ruin in its wake. This game against Castleknock was to be, I felt intimately, a test of morale. I felt myself the focal point of the Clongowes spirit, for I was depended upon as the one sure bat of the team. Castleknock had a famous bowler and on him they depended. It would then be a test of my morale

against this bowler. And so indeed it proved.

We won the toss. The game began at once. In a sense the game might be won or lost on the first ball, for I was sent in to bat and to take the first over; against me was the "demon" bowler of Castleknock. I took "centre" . . . and paused. I found myself like Rhoderick Dhu before his famous duel in *The Lady of the Lake*, "looking to sky and earth . . . as what I ne'er might see again." Then I turned to await the first ball. Up ran the famous bowler and hurled a swift straight one at me. Almost before I knew what had happened I heard loud cheers from my schoolfellows all around the field. I had slogged the first ball to the boundary. The next ball the same thing happened, and within the first over of six balls the Clongowes morale was set up, the Castleknock morale was shaken, and we were fair on the road to victory.

I did not achieve all I aimed at by my innings but as facts proved I achieved more than sufficient. Clongowes played better in every way than they had hoped, and after a stirring game were easily victorious. The old flag, the Purple and White, seemed to float more proudly than ever before, and I saw or seemed to see a warmer light of kindliness in the eyes of my masters and boy friends than I had ever seen during my long six years at Clongowes.

As the years passed a sense of the loveliness of

Clongowes had grown on me. I had idealized it and the life it represented. It was the best school in the world. Its spirit, which I believed impregnated every boy that passed through it, was loyalty, honour, good fellowship. Its staff represented culture, virtue, and self-sacrifice. I could not bear to hear a word whispered in criticism of Clongowes. I loved it. It was indeed my *Alma Mater*. So many tender and proud memories were associated with it. Three generations of my family had been educated there. One of my brothers, Joe, had attained to the high honour of captaincy of the school; the other had entered the Jesuit Order from Clongowes. In the little cemetery near its gates my best school friend lay buried.

Often on a summer evening, sitting on a bench watching a cricket match, I had looked round the grounds and woods with a thrill of exquisite delight. The old castle stood before me with its grey stone turrets, and mighty walls covered by purple-red creepers, while at its feet lay green lawns and beds of bright little flowers. Century-old beech trees with copper leaves and glistening silver branches harmonized with the power and kindliness of its rugged outer cornices. About the playgrounds sheep in little groups grazed peacefully, unfrightened by shouts and sharp reports from cricket-bats. In the trees near by there was "the moan of doves" and "the murmur of innumerable bees." Swift and changeful dragon-flies fled to

and from the damp dikes that drained into the Liffey. Sweetest of all, when it broke over the scene, was the Angelus bell from the chapel of the little village of Clane, calling all to sudden immobility and prayer.

One evening, towards the end of my last term at Clongowes, when all its delicate loveliness was making my heart sad for sheer delight, as I sat on a bench alone and apart from the rest, Father Fegan approached me. "Jack" he said, "it's grand, it's wonderful!" "What, Father?" I asked. "The feeling that you belong, heart and soul, to our Lord, Jack! Come now," he continued, with that in his voice that made me feel he was reading the deepest thoughts in my mind, "are you not ready to fight and die for Christ?"

We had more than once discussed together my vocation and this dramatic intrusion of my hero-saint into my secret thoughts was not upsetting nor unwelcome. I realized on the spot that my mind *was* made up finally and irrevocably. The words that came spontaneously to my lips, in answer to his thought rather than his question, I confirmed in a written letter a few days later. "Father," I said, "I will never cease striving to enter the Society of Jesus until I succeed or die."

No vow was ever more sincere. None was ever more frankly or spontaneously made. Never did sky, or fields, or protecting trees offer a more fair or

sacred altar for the sacrifice of a boy's heart and soul to a cause that seemed divinely great. Somewhere that offering must have been registered . . . somewhere there must have been expectancy that good would come of it . . . but in the mysterious dance of life much remains obscure.

CHAPTER III

DUBLIN

ABOUT half a year after leaving Clongowes I found myself seated at a high desk on an office stool, making entries in an enormous ledger in a neat round hand. I could hear the dull thudding of engines as I worked, and in my nostrils was the pungent odour of burnt hops. From the window I could see jaunting cars and cabs driving swiftly and shakily over rough pavement. Looking upwards I could see clouds and smoke and occasionally a flight of city sparrows from one chimney-top to another. In my heart there was a sense of dull resignation to my lot. I felt no interest in the items I was so carefully recording which had to do with barrels and hogsheads, but, on the other hand, I felt no inclination to grumble or grouse. The other three clerks who were seated at the same desk addressed remarks to one another, or to me from time to time, but they had no reference to the business of the office. One usually spoke about yacht racing in Dunlaoghaire harbour; another about association football; and the

third about actresses from England who happened to be playing in one of the Dublin theatres.

It was no little change from schoolboy life in Clongowes amid the fine meadows and beech woods of Kildare. Now I seldom saw a green field save on Saturday afternoon or on Sunday. At Clongowes I had been free from care and responsiblity; now I found myself immersed in the hard grind of the business world, constrained to labor in a stuffy office from 10 A. M. to 5 P. M. each day and on occasion to stay on for a few extra hours (without any additional pay) so as to clear up arrears of work. The gentle religious inspiration that had sweetened and lightened every duty at Clongowes had no meaning in my present surroundings which were for the most part Protestant, and to some extent quite irreligious. There was no place here for "Father Fegans" and had I ventured to take my beads in my hands during an idle moment, to recite a decade of the rosary I should, of course, have been laughed at. The secret that I was carrying in my heart, of preparing myself by my training here in the great brewery of Messrs. Arthur Guinness Son & Co. for my future life as a Jesuit, was such that it would not have been believed had it been betrayed.

It was a more or less unexpected discovery that had led me to take the step of becoming a wage-earner so soon after leaving school. When, having said fare-

well to Clongowes in June, 1901, I joined my mother and brother Joe in their new home in Dublin, I soon found to my distress that the finances of the family were in a perilous condition. My eldest brother, Charlie, having spent a short time in the Jesuit noviciate, had married and gone to England with his wife, withdrawing all support from my mother. Joe, who was now studying medicine, was as impractical as my mother in business affairs and debts were rapidly accumulating. There were current bills to be paid, and college fees, and the only incoming revenue was from quarterly dividends, which were eaten up as soon as they arrived. It was up to someone to set about earning money and putting things into shipshape, and I accepted this rôle very gladly, feeling no little pride in being instrumental in keeping afloat a home that I loved. I set about studying for the rather difficult entrance examination for Guinness's Brewery, and secured in due time a First Grade Clerkship.

The new home, though less splendid and roomy than Terracina, was comfortable and pretty. It was located in an old and quiet quarter of Dublin. A line of trees ran down the centre of the road on which it was situated. There was a broad patch of waste land at the back of it, ending in the Grand Canal. Joe and I had a comfortable study, papered in soft red, with cosy chairs, bright lamps, and shelves of our favourite books, where we read and studied to-

gether each evening. Downstairs was a bright parlour where mother, as gay and optimistic as ever, and little changed save for the silver in her hair, awaited us when our work was over, to chat with us at the fire.

I can recall no period of my life so serenely happy as the three years that I spent, in company with my mother and brother, while I awaited my coming of age that was to mark my entrance into the Jesuit Order. My brother was the best of companions and our tastes coincided perfectly. Together we went to the theatre when great English actors came to Dublin. Together we played football for University College in winter, while in summer we took country walks or cycle rides, or went swimming and fishing. Joe was an ardent *littérateur*, and something of a poet. He delighted to read Horace and Juvenal with me, and was no less keen about etching the profiles of celebrities of Dublin. Though not religiously inclined himself, he respected the religious enthusiasms of others, and, truth to tell, from time to time underwent mild "conversions." But his conversions never lasted long. Mother had found an outlet for her energy and goodness of heart in visiting the sick poor. Daily she repaired to the various Dublin hospitals carrying books and papers, with which to cheer and comfort the patients. Of course she had their spiritual good in mind but she was too fair-minded

to proselytize. "Gaffing souls" was, however, the playful term with which Joe described her activities. Meanwhile I was able to observe faithfully the religious routine I had planned for myself before leaving Clongowes. I used to hear early mass every day and receive communion. I made spiritual retreats in advent, and as I shall tell presently I engaged also in religious charitable work. In the evenings I studied for and attended university night courses in arts in preparation for my degree.

The Dublin in which we lived was full of interest. It was then, and is still, a city of paradoxes. Very beautiful in its surroundings, and in some of its contours, it is nevertheless in great part tawdry and ugly . . . a mixture of the magnificent and the sordid. It is a city of sincere religion and yet it abounds in crime, atheism and vice. There is no lack of culture, art and dramatic genius in Dublin, nor is there anywhere else more wit and scholarship; nevertheless, crass ignorance and superstition stalk its streets. It is a city of farce and tragedy, peopled by idealists, saints, cut-throats and racketeers. One rubs elbows with tuneful poets, profound philosophers, sophisticated idlers at one moment, and at the next with the most degraded of politicians and the most fanatical of propagandists. To live there amid so much squalor, disorder and beauty means that one must take sides on the great question of the worthwhileness of

living, and declare oneself an optimist or a pessimist.

Chief among the paradoxes of Dublin life that confront one is the amazing affection which it inspires in those whom it treats most cruelly. Dublin's broken citizens are precisely those who surrender most completely to its fascination. "Like velvet under his feet" are the paving stones of its streets to the crustless beggar or the rheumatic tortured by the damp mists and cold winds of the Liffey banks. The erstwhile rich, sucked into poverty by the gambling devil that haunts Dublin, still love it for the wild drives they enjoyed on jaunting cars to the Park Races, or Leopardstown. Drunkards in rags, with bloodshot eyes, penniless and starving, can never abandon it nor do they find fault with it for the wretched tenements in which they were reared and taught the habit that was their undoing.

The paradox of Dublin which for me was the most interesting of all was centred in the nature of her biggest business and the esteem in which it was held by all her best citizens, lay and clerical. This business is the vast and magnificently organized brewery at St. James Gate, on the south side of the Liffey, close to the Phœnix Park. Better known as Guinness's Brewery, it manufactures the famous "stout." It gives more employment and pays more wages than any other business in Southern Ireland. It supplies a high percentage of the revenue of the Irish Free

State, and indirectly of the Church, but it is also the source of a high percentage of the misery in the city.

Haunting every phase of the curious, half-pagan life of Dublin is this black and bitter Guinness's stout. All save cranks, or folk momentarily under the influence of temperance enthusiasm, drink it, and continue drinking it all their lives. Dublin slum mothers, nourishing their babes, drink it and smile with joy when their little ones are able to take tiny sips. Little girls hurry along back lanes at night, with their mother's shawl covering a jug of stout, hoping that daddy if he gets enough to drink at home will not resort to the saloon. The gravedigger, when business is plentiful, consumes his fifteen pints a day. The jarvey jumps off his car "at the corner" to swallow hastily a foaming pint. After football or cricket matches private bars are thronged and the play is cunningly discussed under the stimulus of the well-loved black beer. Priests and people, professional men of every rank, writers and commercial travellers (as Irish salesmen are called), women of every grade of society, from those described by Sean O'Casey to those who attend spiritualistic séances in Fitzwilliam Square, in couples and trios frequent cosy corners to drink stout. And along the streets of Dublin there is no more familiar sight than Guinness's trucks, drawn by magnificent Clydesdale horses, carrying mighty red-tipped barrels for distribution in every

quarter of the city.

It might seem at first sight somewhat strange that a young man who had vowed himself to religion and the cause of Christ should without any scruple take employment in what was largely a factory of crime and misfortune, for there can be no doubt but that stout in Ireland has conduced in abundant measure to the undoing of the people. But neither I nor those whose advice I followed ever looked upon the situation in that way. In such matters, in regions where religious idealism and economic necessity impinge, it is rare to find perfect consistency of conduct. In Ireland consistency of such sort is unknown. No one, for instance, thought it wrong that immediately before or after such religious ceremonies as Christian burials or marriages, stout should be distributed as refreshment. And it was not infrequent for penitents, about to face the ordeal of confession, to have recourse to stout for the courage that it awakened.

It was, then, with a clear conscience that I filled my position at Guinness's Brewery. I did not, as I have said, find the work interesting, nor was I, as I ought to have been, impressed with a sense of its importance. But none the less I used my brains as well as I could, and before long had devised a system of account books calculated to reduce clerical labour and save time. My system was in the end adopted by the firm, though not without considerable opposi-

tion on the part of the conservative element among my seniors. Mindful of my religious apostolate, I sought, when opportunity offered, to enlighten my fellow clerks about the Catholic Church, and I came to be known among them as a very devout Catholic. Sometimes in spare moments I used to read books of science which I carried in my pockets, for I was bent on educating myself up to the high standard which I believed the Jesuit Order required. This activity of mine was noticed and commented upon unfavourably and led to a dignified rebuke from the authorities when the time came for the yearly "interviews."

The interviewing of each member of the higher staff by the directors took place at the end of the year in the luxurious board-room of the company. At one side of a long table sat the directors, Lord Iveagh, Colonel Renny Tailyour, Mr. Digges La Touche and other directors of the time. The staff official, nervous and alone, seated himself on the opposite side of the table. The directors then asked questions based upon the reports sent in to them by the departmental heads. The official was given an opportunity of making complaints if he had any to make. Everything was solemn, formal and, needless to say, trying for the new recruit officials.

Before a board of directors such as I have described, a young official, pale and shy, of nineteen years, appeared one afternoon in December, 1902.

As he approached the table he heard the words: "Kindly be seated, Mr. Barrett." He sat down and looked about meekly, not knowing who among the five great men before him would address him. Suddenly a slight voice, the source of which was difficult to determine, enquired: "You are with us since last March, Mr. Barrett?" "Yes, sir!" I replied to everybody for I could not be sure who had put the question. "You like your work?" "Yes, sir," I answered as before to everybody, but the question disturbed me vaguely for in truth I found office work rather unpalatable. "Have you any complaints to make?" "No, sir," I said, and a sense of relief was mine at the suggestion that the interview was already finished. I was anxious to get away as soon as possible for in a friendly scrimmage with a Catholic clerk a short time previously I had broken an office chair and I had fears lest there should be a reference to that escapade. But what was this? A tall languid man who had been reclining in his chair was slowly drawing himself up and now he looked immense. I recognized him as the genius of the company, financier and aristocrat, the great Digges La Touche. His eyes had been searching mine while I sat there. I had been painfully conscious of it. Now he was going to address me. I tried to get ready for the worst. Slowly he drawled, with what I took to be sarcasm, "*Mr. Barrett, do you throw your whole soul into your*

work?" I was dumbfounded. His finger touched a sore. I knew I was punctual, even that I did all my work, and did it fairly accurately, but I also knew that my heart was not in it. Was I not mainly preoccupied about guarding the "pearl of great price," my vocation? Here, with justice, an atheist business man was pointing a moral to me—he was showing me tactfully that it was questionable conduct to enter into a business contract with St. James Gate Brewery and make of the employment it gave a mere convenience to further personal schemes. When the question was asked, I must have started, for all the directors glanced at me. I felt ashamed, and murmured apologetically that I was trying to do my best. A tart, "Very well, that will do, Mr. Barrett!" came as a rejoinder, and the interview ended. Later on I began to contrast my conduct unfavourably with that of the other officials who were a hundred per cent loyal to their employers. Nevertheless, in spite of some misgivings I continued to do apostolic work in office hours and founded a Vincent de Paul Conference among the brewery employees. For this I received great praise among the prominent Catholic Dublin men. No one of them questioned the wisdom or the seemliness of my behaviour.

Work with the Vincent de Paul Society brought me into immediate contact with the raw horror of Dublin slum life. There I saw scenes of misery and poverty

so appalling as to be almost grotesque. There comes to mind the memory of a visit to an old couple living in a foul hovel in a tenement house off Townsend Street. The windows were broken, the floor was rat-holed in several places, the door was off its hinges. The wife, a chronic invalid, weak, helpless, half her face eaten away by cancer, was barefooted and in rags. Her husband, equally sick and weak, had once been a carpenter. There remained to him a hammer, a saw and a few pieces of rotten wood with which he made rough boxes. His leg was swollen and ulcerous, and beside him as he worked was a dirty can in which he spat blood. There was no table or chair in the room and no bed save a pile of noisome rags. The room was, besides, damp and dark, yet the landlord was insistent on getting his rent of thirty cents a week. The couple had no friends, and of course no hope. They strove to keep up the fight to pay the rent, for the alternative was the workhouse and *separation from each other.* To keep together till the end was the only ambition left them. They submitted patiently to the interrogatory of the Vincent de Paul members and thanked God for the fifty cents a week that they were allowed for a period of a few weeks. Fifty cents meant comfort for them. This and other cases made a deep impression on my mind. They stimulated my anxiety "to do something." They laid the foundation for my conviction that reform was

needed. Such conditions should not exist in a civilized, much less in a Catholic country. As yet I had no theory as to the underlying causes of destitution, and thought that well-organized charity should suffice to cope with the problem. Meanwhile with religious zeal I gave a great deal of my time and attention to social work.

During the football season my brother and I played regularly for University College. He was captain of the team and a brilliant "centre forward." We had many strange adventures together in connection with our games. On one occasion we travelled to Athlone, a country town, to play the local team, young farmers trained as hurlers, fast, furious and unconventional. Wild whoops, tripping, threats of violence, and a ground more like a bog than a football field made the game chaotic. The town bellman had summoned by word of mouth the loyal citizens to cheer to victory their heroes. It was more like the reputed Donnybrook Fair than association football. With a hostile referee and a menacing crowd of spectators, our team suffered decisive defeat.

After the game we were conducted for entertainment to a very primitive saloon. The local butcher with an enormous knife in his hand, and much the worse for liquor, danced a wild war dance around the table before carving the enormous ham cooked for

the occasion. A half-crazy old woman, dirty and maudlin drunk, served the "young gintilmen" from Dublin and kissed them or tried to do so as she distributed the ham. Whiskey in jars appeared as dessert, and meanwhile the vagabonds of the town had assembled outside the windows gaping in on the ceremony. Our departure from the depot was marked by mixed derision and good will. The Celt is not overgenerous towards a defeated foe, and the townsfolk farewelled us, a beaten team, with hilarious laughter and crude jokes. Our only revenge was to have a sarcastic account of the game published through the agency of a friendly reporter.

My brother and I were no less interested in theatricals and oratory than we had been as children in Terracina. Together we frequented the theatre when distinguished actors came to Dublin. We saw Sarah Bernhardt in one of her best plays, and heard her utter one of those soul-piercing shrieks that haunt the ears for days. We delighted in the renditions of Shakespearean characters by Forbes Robertson, Martin Harvey, Benson and Henry Irving. One night when we were present, in response to repeated calls for a speech after the curtain had dropped, Henry Irving came before the audience and in a fumbling and hesitating way thanked the people of Dublin for their cordiality. He read a telegram of congratulations that he had just received and after much stam-

mering retired. His effort at making a speech of his own was a sorry one, all the more pitiful indeed when contrasted with the magnificence of his appearance when he was declaiming the words written by another.

The finest of Irish orators in those days was John E. Redmond, the chairman of the Irish Parliamentary Party, and the political leader of the nation. Once we heard him speak in the Mansion House, Dublin, on the occasion of a public protest against an English measure of coercion. It was customary when each new Coercion Bill passed the British House of Commons, for the Irish people to assemble so that their Members of Parliament might raise their voices against, and shake their fists at the British Lion. John Redmond, who was moderate and refined, and more balanced than most of his followers, did not relish such a task, and probably thought it absurd and humiliating. But he had to satisfy the people. In the Mansion House, on this occasion, he indulged the taste of his audience for "heat." He was cheered vociferously, and concluded his address by hissing fiercely, so that the words he hissed seemed to sizzle against the walls: It [the Coercion Bill] is an outrage . . . an insult . . . and a lie!"

Famous among the preachers of the time was the English Jesuit, Father Bernard Vaughan. His oratory was delightful and picturesque. With his small,

but clear and polished voice, he scattered pretty words over the audience so that they fell about like scented raindrops. His gestures, though bold, were graceful and infinitely varied. He ruled over his hearers, commanding their attention, like a queen. His handsome figure and delicate hands, together with his air of dignity and confidence, made him the darling of the "upper ten," but those who came to hear doctrines expounded fully and solidly were doomed to disappointment.

In Dublin he was unpopular, for all his attempted blarney. Dubliners shuddered when the point of his sermon came where in his ultra-English accent he began, as he was sure to do: "I love the Irish! I adore Erin," etc. Most of his hearers in St. Francis Xavier's were well aware that when his sermon was over, as likely as not, he would drive in polished silk hat and black suède gloves to the Phœnix Park, to pay his respects at the Viceregal Lodge to the representatives of the Crown. My brother used, on our arrival at home after one of his sermons, to reproduce, with due emphasis on voice and gesture, a sermon à la Vaughan to the mingled amusement and edification of my mother.

It would have been impossible for me, living in a city like Dublin, where, in spite of so much religion, vice and poverty abound, not to have had a glimpse or two of the scarlet side of life. When my first

glimpse was vouchsafed me, my reaction was one of a horror that will perhaps appear to readers priggish and absurd. It occurred one evening when I was returning home alone, along the path through the trees that line the banks of the Grand Canal. This pathway I knew to be a resort of lovers, but it had never occurred to me that it should be haunted by those unfortunate women about whom I had learned chiefly through the novels of Charles Dickens. I was really very unsophisticated, and though I understood in a vague way that there was prostitution in every large city, I had never realized that it stalked the streets of Catholic Dublin. Anyhow the Grand Canal was associated in my mind with the drowning of unwanted cats and with the bathing of street urchins on hot summer days, and not with vice or sin.

This evening, however, my eyes were opened. I had just passed a clump of trees and was hurrying along in the dusk when I heard a woman's voice addressing me. I stopped to listen as I could not hear distinctly what she was saying. I saw her then, a poor emaciated woman, no longer young, dressed in black, with a shawl over her shoulders. "Darling!" she said, in an affected, caressing voice, "I was waiting for you!" "What do you mean?" I asked. "Come with me, darling," she continued, "and I will make you happy." As I hurried away without answering she added something about "a shilling" . . .

"it would only be a shilling," or something such. I felt upset and unnerved. Not that there was any contempt for the poor woman in my mind, but the sense of being so near sad and sordid things made me feel miserable.

All the time I lived in Dublin I maintained a close connection with my old school. To spend a day there with my Jesuit friends had the inevitable effect of stimulating my effort to lead a life of heroic virtue in preparation for the noviciate. But over and above that it rested and refreshed me to pass a few hours in the woods and fields of Kildare. I walked about the grounds alone or in company with some Jesuit, and revisited the ruined castle of the Irish patriot Hamilton Rowan at Rath-Coffey, or the high mound that marks the supposed burial place of the Celtic Queen, Maeve. I was welcomed as one of the recent alumni of whom the college was proud, for already it was known that I was "a good influence" among the past Clongowes boys in Dublin, and it was considered highly creditable on my part to have secured a good position in Guinness's Brewery.

Naturally, my Jesuit friends did not hesitate to encourage me to follow my vocation, and to paint glorious pictures of religions life. But there was one exception, one voice which warned me against precipitate action in entering the Society of Jesus. The voice was that of Father James Brennan, an experi-

enced and kindly old man, who had seen and suffered much in life. As a boy at Clongowes I had always respected Father Brennan, though, like the rest, I was somewhat fearful of arousing his anger, for by nature he was a man of stormy passion. I had seen him, white with rage, uttering words of withering scorn that crushed in an instant an outburst of sabotage. Now he was grown mild in temper and spent much time in prayer and meditation.

Meeting me one day when I was revisiting Clongowes, he stopped me and began to chat. It was nice to hear from him that he thought well of me for giving my time to work among the poor as a member of the Vincent de Paul Society, and for earning my own livelihood. "To help others along is the best kind of virtue," he said, "and to earn one's own bread is the best sign of manliness." Then he continued, looking at me closely, "Don't be in a hurry to quit the work you are doing in order to enter our Society. You should know that things in the Society are not what they seem to outsiders." He begged me to reconsider the whole matter and not to allow myself to be guided by pious dreams.

I listened, respectfully, of course, but with a kind of horror. I wondered what had come over the man that he could give such apparently worldly advice. Was not the Society of Jesus the chosen regiment of Christ? And how could one do wrong in enlisting in

such a regiment? My mind was already made up, and my heart was wedded to the scheme of becoming a Jesuit. I could not even get myself to debate the question or to admit that there were two sides to it. Had I not already informally vowed myself to Christ? Had I not, only two years before, promised Father Fegan that "I should never cease striving to enter the Society of Jesus until I should succeed or die"? Nothing on earth would have held me back at that moment. I was counting the months and days that separated me from the consummation of my plans. I was reading, studying, labouring to be a fit subject for St. Ignatius' great Order. How mistaken, then, Father Brennan was in thinking that I should "reconsider the whole matter"! With me it was a case of blind love and I would have died rather than be unfaithful to my spiritual spouse!

Though my mind was full of my vocation and of my plans to safeguard and fulfil it, I never discussed it with my mother or brother. I had been warned not to do so . . . "It is something between yourself and God," I had been told. "Like a delicate hothouse plant it is liable to wither in the chilling air of the world's criticism. Keep it as a sacred secret in your heart, and only discuss it with your confessor or some spiritual director." And so my vocation remained a secret from the two people in all the world who were most desirous of my real good and hap-

piness.

On the other hand, I discussed it freely with a Jesuit confessor residing in Milltown Park to whom I used to repair every Saturday evening for confession. This priest, Father Forestal, had once given a "spiritual retreat" that I thought very solid and inspiring, and as a consequence of hearing him discourse on spiritual things with unction, I took it that he was far advanced on the road to perfection. I therefore resolved to make him my confessor. He was a florid little man of middle age, affable and effusive in manner. He gave me the privilege of going directly to his room when I arrived at the college, and there I usually found him smoking a good cigar and reading *The Pink 'Un,* a sporting paper. He always received me in a kindly way but not infrequently with embarrassment, the reason for which I detected in his breath. I don't think I ever found him reading a spiritual or serious book or praying at his *prie-Dieu* but such was my proneness to idealize that I still considered him "far advanced on the road to perfection" and blamed myself for not recognizing under some concealed form his sanctity. I drew edification out of this contact with my kind but indolent confessor, and after each visit to him *felt* my vocation stronger than ever.

Early in July, 1904, I wrote a letter to the managing director of St. James Gate Brewery tendering

my resignation. I gave as my reason my determination to devote my energies "to one of the learned professions." Forthwith I began to make immediate preparations for my entrance into the Jesuit noviciate.

The approaching parting with my mother and Joe troubled me more and more as the last days drew rapidly by. The little home that I had come to care for so much and that I had helped to keep afloat was going to be broken up. The lives of the two souls dearest to me in all the world were going to be upset. But what could I do? Was not Christ calling me? And was I not pledged to obey His call?

I resolved to break the news to my brother first. The scene where I carried out this difficult task is still vivid in my memory. Joe was seated on a sofa in the parlour, reading near the window. Mother was out. It was afternoon and all was quiet. I sat opposite him, wondering how I should begin. An overwhelming emotion suddenly seized me. I opened my mouth to speak and the words would not come. This had never happened to me before, nor has it ever happened since. Joe looked a little startled. Then, making another effort, the words came. "Joe," I said, "I am going to Tullabeg [the noviceship] on the seventh of September." Joe closed the book he was reading and gazed at me. He was less emotional than I, but on this occasion he seemed deeply

affected. I shall never forget his glance. He said nothing, but his eyes seemed to look into my heart . . . perhaps accusing me . . . perhaps only plaintively . . . and then through me into the future. Withdrawing his gaze he reached for a hat that was near him, uttered a kind of sigh or sob, and went out. He went out, as I learned after, for a long and lonely walk by the desolate sea front that stretches from Sandymount to Salthill. He did not want to mar my happiness which he recognized to be involved in my entering religion, but he realized in a flash that there lay before him the long distressing path of comforting mother for the empty chair by the fireside. What would he say to her when Jack was gone? He could only paint for her bright pictures of Jack's happiness in the noviceship . . . of the brave young Jesuit companions he would have . . . of studies soon finished, of Jack as a master at Clongowes . . . and finally of Jack as a great preacher in Gardiner Street Church (Dublin) and a constant visitor at home. "He will sit in that chair, then, mother, and you'll be proud to hear from his own lips all the grand and good things he is able to do as a Jesuit priest! Can't you see, mother? Don't cry now! You will be glad and proud to have Jack a priest!"

Mother and I had a short and pleasant holiday in the north of Ireland, at Bundoran. We walked over the hills, played a little golf, and sat for hours on the

rocks together, talking while the waves splashed at our feet. Sometimes I detected tears in mother's eyes, but never for long, for she was brave and could pull herself together quickly. Side by side, as in the old days in Dunlaoghaire, we knelt to pray at the feet of a matronly, kind madonna, and we commended to her care the future.

"And we will love thee, Mary!
Trusting all to thee,
What is past and present,
What is yet to be."

Our religion sustained us and made it easy for us to rejoice in the lovely skies and landscapes that varied or seemed to change from day to day in colour and shape.

One afternoon, when I was alone, straying by the shore, a thin, weakly youth approached me. "Do you remember me?" he asked, in a sad voice. "Is it John Quinn?" I answered, recalling to mind a delicate lad who had been at Clongowes with me a few years previously. "Yes," he said, "I'm John Quinn. But life is very dreary for me." Then looking at me, hoping for understanding, as though he knew what my good fortune was, he told me how the dream of his life had been to enter the Jesuits. But his dream was frustrated. He had been rejected as unsound physically, and there was no hope of his ever being accepted. When I told mother afterwards

about my meeting this old Clongownian, and what he had said, her eyes filled with tears of *pity*.

The day of separation came at last . . . gloomy as all such days. Mother and I went into the city early and were photographed together. The photograph brought out all too clearly how much mother was suffering for there were lines sunken deep around her eyes. We had a last meal at home and then drove to the depot, the same bleak and forbidding depot that nine years before had witnessed the departure of my brothers and myself for school. This parting was infinitely more serious than the former one, for it was to be forever . . . like the parting of mother and Son on Calvary.

That night I knelt in a cold monastic cell on the borders of the dreary moor which surrounds the Jesuit noviciate at Tullabeg. My mind went back to the home I had left and to the fireside where my imagination told me my mother and brother would be. I could see where mother was sitting with bowed head, trying to knit: opposite sat Joe, paper in hand pretending to read but glancing anxiously across at the lonely bowed head. He was defending me, in his own mind, as best he could, against the accusing suspicion that my retreat into religion with its dreadful consequences for mother was selfish on my part.

"Did Jack know what he was doing?" he was asking himself, "did he realize how we should suffer?"

CHAPTER IV

A JESUIT NOVICE

A BOY of seventeen, with pink cheeks, curly black hair, and large red hands, stood at the end of a wooden corridor, near a statue of St. Joseph, surrounded by a silent group of cassocked youths and men, with downcast eyes, and hands modestly joined. They seemed to be awaiting some announcement in perfect patience. At the other end of the corridor, which was bare, save for sacred pictures, there was a statue of the Sacred Heart with a little red lamp burning at its feet. The walls of the corridor were of light blue tint, and floods of light poured in from spotlessly clean windows that gave on the south. There was an air of calm and solemnity as befitted this autumnal morning, the feast of the stigmata of the gentle Francis of Assisi. Suddenly the pink-cheeked boy, replaced in his pocket a watch, and in a loud throaty voice cried *Deo Gratias.*

At the signal, like the up-springing of a flock of doves, voices and eyes were raised. Felicitations, *proficiats* were heard on all sides. The cassocked

figures mingled together exchanging greetings. There was a remarkable admixture of gladness and restraint depicted on every face, for, as befitted Jesuit novices, to be at once cheerful and recollected was the purpose of each one. Yet it was with a certain shyness and sheepishness that the eight new novices, formally admitted into the sanctum of the noviciate at the signal *Deo Gratias*, received the warm welcome of their brothers in Christ. Needless to say we felt very happy. For ten long days since we arrived at the college we had been subjected to a careful training for the noviceship. Now we were at last *real novices* entitled to wear the cassock of the Order and prepared to face bravely the two years of stern discipline that lay before us until we should be called upon to take our vows. The noviceship, of which we were now part and parcel, *felt* supremely holy. Our new companions, the "second year" novices, seemed to us perfect, full of fraternal charity and inflamed with the love of God. Holiness seemed to permeate the atmosphere of the noviceship. Almost did it ooze from the walls, chairs, tables, and spiritual books of the *cameratas* in which we were destined to make our meditations. Surely it was good "to dwell in the House of the Lord"! We were in no way repelled by the simplicity and severity of our future sleeping quarters, or by the sacrifices and penances which we knew awaited us. For two years we should be de-

prived of all the amusements, however innocent, that we had heretofore enjoyed . . . no thrilling stories of adventure to read . . . no exciting games to watch . . . no concerts to hear . . . no friends to converse with . . . no cigarettes . . . no long sleeps in the mornings . . . no real holidays. But, on the other hand, we counted on compensations of another kind, on great peace of soul, on great joy in sacrificing all for Christ, and on great spiritual sweetness in prayer.

After a brief reunion with the old novices, a bell rang and the routine of strict monastic life began. To each new-comer was assigned an *Angelus*, a guardian-angel novice, to initiate him into the customs and duties of the noviceship. This Angelus had also the duty of admonishing his protégé when the latter made mistakes, or was guilty of omissions, or of such slight external faults as inevitably occur. To me was assigned, as Angelus, Brother Sydes, a man of middle age, who had practised law in Australia for many years, but who had finally yielded to his mystical yearning to be religious. Brother Sydes was interesting and witty. He sang well, and had no end of droll though edifying stories. He was deeply spiritual but found it an arduous task to restrain himself from engaging in argument. The fault that he was most frequently called upon to correct was 'argumentativeness.' On one occasion, at a conference over

which the Master of Novices presided, he had caused great amusement (as well as astonishment) by telling the master, in reference to some statement that he had made, that "he was barking up the wrong tree." On another occasion, a hot summer afternoon, he had fallen asleep during meditation and seeing himself in dream again in the brush and backwoods of Australia, he had begun kicking at the chapel pew, and saying aloud . . . "Get away, dog! Get away!"

Brother Sydes soon taught me all about the customs and rules. He did not fail to impress upon me their inexorableness and the need of obeying to the letter every regulation. "We have to submit our judgment, here, as well as our will," he said. "It is not our part to question or criticize any order that is given or any custom that exists but just to fall in whole-heartedly and docilely with everything." He told me how he himself marvelled at the "prudence" of some novices whom he knew to be mere boys in years. He was full of optimism and looked forward to the day when he could, as a Jesuit priest, preach the word of God in his own materialistic and pleasure-loving country.

The Jesuit noviceship has been described so many times that it is unnecessary to enumerate here all its characteristics. Father Bernard Vaughan S. J. named it a "spiritual treadmill" and in many re-

spects the description is true. Of the two years during which it lasts, no quarter of an hour is unaccounted for: there is always a definite *duty* awaiting the novice. Besides there is strict supervision all the time. Everything within, as well as every external act, must be controlled: even thoughts and feelings must be conformed to rule. No initiative or individualism is allowed by the Jesuit Constitutions during this period of training, nor is any privacy tolerated. Everything said or done is matter for the superior's ear. The novice must, save only for the clothes on his back, live in complete nudity before the eyes of the master. But in all this hardship he is sustained by the great thoughts put before him in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

During my noviciate I never hesitated, never looked back, never questioned the perfection of the life I had chosen. A steady and holy light seemed to glow in my soul all the time. Often I was transported with divine love: rarely did I feel even momentary depression. I was full of peace and contentment. At last, as it seemed, I had found a harbourage where ideals were realities and where high dreams were commonplaces. Here, to count upon the realization of lofty hopes and ambitions was not to be drunk but to be sober. The exaltation that our religious exercises excited in us lifted us and our happy little world into a high region from which we

contemplated, benevolently and compassionately, ordinary mortals. Our compassion for them, engendered by our faith that Christ had died to save them, lay at the root of the intense "zeal for souls" that we felt.

It is impossible to overdraw the picture of the fervour of religious enthusiasm in the Jesuit novice. He strains on the leash ready to leap into the supposedly furious fight raging the world over for the cause of Christ. If he is allowed to preach a little *ferverino* to the poor inmates of a workhouse hospital, his sermon is a jumble of exotic piety and tender aspirations . . . a medley of pretty phrases and endearments addressed to the Saviour. He means well, he yearns to do good, he is all on fire; but his mind is a chaos of confused and tempestuous sentiment. Meanwhile he is subjected to severe "tests" by his superior. He is sent to shovel away manure heaps or to clean out toilets: in the burning sun he is put to work in a hay field, or on a raw winter day he is commissioned to carry armfuls of fallen leaves. He is taught to regard everything which obedience imposes upon him as the most important work in all the world . . . in fact, as a special duty given him by God Himself. However distasteful or humiliating or foolish the task, he does it readily and willingly with all his heart.

One day the superior sent for me and asked me if,

at Clongowes, I had known Willie Redmond, the son of John Redmond. I answered that I had known him slightly. "Very well," said he, "you are to go straight to the parlour where you will find him and his aunt, Mrs. Redmond, at lunch with Brother Dalton. You are to get Willie to go out for a walk with you at once."

I was very untidy, being attired in a soiled cassock. My hands were dirty from sweeping a corridor. "Am I to go as I am, Father?" I asked, "or shall I wash my hands and put on a clean cassock?" "Go as you are!" was the reply.

I descended at once to the parlour, tapped at the door, and walked in. Lunch had just begun. The soup was still on the table. All were surprised to see me, but Brother Dalton, a gentlemanly fellow, stood up and introduced me to his sister, Mrs. Redmond. I shook hands with her and with Willie Redmond, at that time a stout young fellow of eighteen. After an awkward pause I looked at Willie and said: "Will you come out for a walk?" I had been told to do so and had no choice but to obey. My invitation was like the explosion of a bombshell. Willie dropped his soup spoon in astonishment and gazed at me as if I were mad. Brother Dalton, my fellow novice, looked horrified. Only Mrs. Redmond retained her self-possession. She sensed something strange was afoot. "Indeed, Willie, you are getting

too fat," he said, "and it is much better for you not to eat your lunch. Besides we must be setting off soon to catch the train."

In a flash I saw it all. The superior wanted to get the visitors off his hands and he feared that, if the lunch was eaten, it would be too late to catch the early train and they would have to wait until a later one. He had made me the cat's-paw in his inhospitable plot. "Won't you come out for a walk now, Willie?" I repeated. "It's so nice out in the grounds!" Poor Willie had been walking about in the grounds for the previous two hours waiting for his lunch, ravenously hungry after his long trip from Dublin. Still he hesitated, looking enviously at a nice pair of roast ducks that were laid on a side table. "Oh! Go out," said Mrs. Redmond, "since Mr. Barrett asks you. I'm sure it will be better for you." With a grunt that I took to be a subdued curse, Willie got up and came out with me to the front of the monastery where a car was waiting. While we walked up and down he never said a word.

Immediately after the departure of the Redmonds for the early train I was sent for by the superior. I knew full well that he was not going to congratulate me on my obedience but to find fault with me for something or other as was his wont. "Did you go to the parlour in that trim?" he asked. "Yes, Father," I answered, "you told me to go as I was."

"Brother," he replied, "tell your fault in the refectory today at dinner, for breaking the customs of the noviceship by going to the parlour with filthy hands." I was astonished, but said nothing. Noticing my astonishment, he added, "While telling your fault hold out your hands and show the community how soiled they are."

At the beginning of dinner I knelt on the floor of the refectory and having dutifully kissed it as was the custom, began: "Reverend Fathers and Loving Brothers, by order of holy obedience I tell my fault. I accuse myself of breaking the customs of the noviceship by going to the parlour with filthy hands like these" (here I held up my hands). Then again, according to procedure I kissed the floor and began to rise. But before I arose the superior intervened again. "Brother, go to your place at once and do not again make such silly gestures with your hands in the presence of the community."

Though I submitted cheerfully and even gladly to such humiliations as I have just now described, and though no less than other novices I was carried away on the tide of exaltation, I found myself awakening suspicion and hostility in my superiors by some form of "independence" that betrayed itself in my conduct. At the time I was not aware of this independence, nor could I well understand to what my superiors were alluding when they accused me of

"obstinacy" as they did on more than one occasion. At the root of the trouble may have lain my tendency to idealize everything and everybody. I may have idealized too much, and too comprehensively. Certainly it is that I came, wrongly as events proved, to believe that my superiors would rejoice to see me exercising to the full whatever little liberty of judgment the rules allowed.

Perhaps an instance or two will help to elucidate the matter. It was, according to rule, permissible for a novice to take a glass of beer at dinner, should he so choose. None of the novices ever did so, but the rule remained and was never rescinded. Well, it occurred to me that in my case the omission to take beer at dinner was a weakness rather than a virtue. Was it not through fear of what might be said, through "human respect," that I neglected to take beer? I resolved to conquer this weakness and to take beer . . . and I did so. But this action of mine was not seen from my point of view at all. I was accused of "doing things that other novices did not do"; of "going my own way"; in fine, of obstinacy and independence! On another occasion when the novices were playing a game of very innocuous hockey on a gravel space, the ball was driven into a garden which was out of bounds. The rule forbade any novice "to go into the garden without permission." I stood near the railing of the garden and saw that I could hook

out the ball with my hockey stick without going into the garden. I thought it was perfectly right to do so and I did it. My action was at once reported to the superior who chided me severely for my obstinacy and disobedience. I listened in silence and with the utmost respect, but however much I tried I could not understand wherein I had done wrong. The matter was trivial but it made a profound impression upon me. Of what use was a man's conscience if it was liable to deceive him in so simple a matter?

In one matter I was perhaps obstinate and disobedient; but it was a matter in which I could not overcome an inborn prejudice. I had always hated and despised spying in any shape or form, and when it was put up to me that it was charity and not espionage to report secretly to the superior every fault in another novice that I observed, every infringement of rule that fell under my notice, I could not accept the explanation. I saw in such tale-bearing interference with another's rights, if not downright espionage. Again and again I got into hot water for not reporting things that had happened in my presence, and once at least I was accused of being lacking in loyalty to the Society which sheltered me, on account of not fulfilling this duty.

There was but one serious crisis for me during my noviciate. For a quarter of an hour it was a case of "touch and go" whether or not I should do something

of startling and drastic import in the very teeth of a sub-superior, Father Richard Campbell. This irascible though pious little man had a very great dislike of all Clongowes boys, and of all novices who were in the least clumsy with their hands. He used to do and say things that caused novices unutterable torture, seeing the nervous and high-strung condition of mind in which they were all living. He stretched his authority to the limits, and even beyond, and made many Draconian laws which increased almost to breaking point noviceship tension. In particular in respect of the management of the sacristy he had made innumerable rules and regulations concerning the ornaments and vases that were to be used on the altars. I had seen novices collapse and weep bitterly after the vocal chastisement Father Campbell inflicted over the breakage of some trivial and valueless ornament. On one such occasion the strange purpose entered my head of teaching Father Campbell that the peace of a human heart is of more moment than the safekeeping of a few gaudy vases. My purpose was quixotic, and evidently I must have been overwrought at the time, but the purpose took shape. I would, I told myself, take an armful of vases to Father Campbell's room and smash them on the floor in his presence saying: "Father, is it right to put more value on these baubles than on the happiness of hearts consecrated to God?" For a quarter of an hour, as I

said, it was a case of touch and go whether or not I should put this purpose into effect. I stood at the sacristy door ready to start and yet hesitating. Finally some sense of the terrific consequences that would ensue restrained me. I should, of course, have been dismissed from the noviceship had I done what I wanted to do . . . and that in my eyes would have been an unthinkable misfortune. And so the moment passed . . . and perhaps with it one of the great "occasions" of my life.

From the noviceship I wrote spiritual letters to my mother and brother telling them of my happiness and inviting, nay, urging them to "sell all and follow Christ." With much use of texts and pretty devotional conceits, I pointed out to them the higher way. In virtue of my newly-won spiritual insight I felt competent to preach the word of God. I did not reflect upon the tears they had shed and the sorrow they had borne in patience for my sake. In my self-sufficiency I went on to explain to them how sufferings are blessings from God . . . I was bent upon making them kiss the wounds that I myself had inflicted. Was I not a prophet of the Lord now? Had I not ascended into the heavens? Should they not be guided by my words in all things? Was I not now one of the group to whom Christ had said: "He that hears *you* hears me?"

A couple of times during my noviceship my mother

was permitted to visit me. When the door of the parlour opened to admit me into her presence I felt the impulse to rush madly to her and take her in my arms. It was no doubt what she eagerly awaited. But the cold hand of religious modesty and decorum checked me and I approached her with downcast eyes and pretended calm. The kiss I gave was in accord with religious prescription, restrained, a kind of *pax Christi* salutation. Her dear eyes filled with tears of mingled pride and pity when she saw me attired in a religious habit. Then, sitting by her side, we chatted for a few short hours. Poor mother! How those interviews must have wounded her gentle and affectionate heart, yet not for worlds would she have allowed me to see her pain. She was trying as best she could to play the game . . . the game that Catholic mothers are asked to play . . . that of reinforcing the work of the Church in the ecclesiastical formation of priestly sons. Later on should the sons grow weary of their servitude the Church invariably bids them think of their mothers and how any ill-considered action would break their "poor mother's heart."

One day the unchanging sameness of noviceship routine was broken by an extraordinary incident . . . as disturbing as an earthquake. Something utterly unprecedented happened . . . something so unforeseen that there was no noviceship legislation to deal

with the matter. Three American girls came into the noviceship quarters!

It occurred on a summer afternoon. Novices were busy sweeping corridors and dusting pictures. Some were removing imaginary cobwebs from a twice-weekly brushed ceiling. All were engaged besides in making pious ejaculations and aspirations. Suddenly the catastrophe happened. The laughter of female voices was heard at the door. Our unexpected visitors were unmistakably American. They stepped in and looked around. The startled novices dropped their brushes and other accoutrements . . . and fled.

The girls, finding themselves within the strange building, wandered along to the end of the corridor, still laughing and talking. At the end of the corridor were situated the noviceship latrines . . . the girls went in and looked around. One novice hurried out past them with crimson cheeks. Meanwhile the superior was being sought in vain by the head novice. The next in command could not be found. A hasty consultation was held *in Latin* among the senior novices . . . but they seemed to have lost their senses and to be unable to deal with the critical situation.

"A saviour of the children of Israel" was, however, forthcoming. He was the elderly Australian lawyer, Brother Sydes to whom I have referred. Having waited dutifully for the head novices to do something and seeing their inability to deal with the

situation, he took the matter into his own hands. He approached within coughing distance of the latrines and gruffly announced in a loud voice that "no visitors were admitted into the college." Presently the girls departed. With their departure we felt that we were delivered from the stark and dreadful vision of sin that had stalked amongst us.

Life in the noviceship was rendered possible by the good food, the healthy regularity, and the frequent invigorating walks through the neighbouring country. There were pathways across broad moors, and tracks over sandy hills to be followed. There were a few small rivers in which we were allowed to bathe in the summer. Occasionally we went on very long walks to a ruined abbey in the district, or to the junction of the Shannon and Brosna rivers. These walks afforded us opportunities of climbing and jumping, and above all refreshed us with new visions of nature. We could forget for a little while that we were spiritual prisoners, and spontaneously we laughed back at daffodils and singing birds and at the wild colts that galloped in the pastures. Some of the novices used to sing then, and some to relax so far as to tell their best stories. It was agreeable to loosen one's armour, as it were, and to feel a little more confident about the possible joy of companionship. We were then like young rabbits peeping for the first time out of their burrows and scenting the sunlit air.

At length the two years drew to a close, and the great morning on which we eight novices were to take our vows arrived. We had been prepared for this beautiful and touching ceremony by a spiritual retreat of eight days. Clad in new cassocks, with vow cross and book of rules in our hands, we knelt around the altar. After the communion of the mass the celebrant turned towards us, holding the host above the ciborium, and listened while in turn we pronounced our solemn promises to live forever as religious in the Society of Jesus, obedient to the Constitutions, in poverty and chastity. Then we received each one the body and blood of the Saviour for whom we had abandoned all things and whom we loved with all the ardour of our generous young hearts. Having received communion we returned to our places in the chapel and knelt motionless, eight living rapturous pillars, aflame with love divine. We thought of the past and thanked God for His goodness . . . we thought of the future and prayed God to sustain us while we laboured for Him. Then we thought of those dear to us, and of the letters of congratulation that we knew awaited us when breakfast would be over.

At the end of the noviceship I found myself a lithesome lad of nearly twenty-three years, habitually courteous in manner, and perhaps too much so; capable of memorizing and concentrating; practical and ambitious in a timid way; very disposed to be friend-

ly, to think the best of everyone, and exceedingly pious. In fine, I was just the creation of the environment in which I had lived, and of the thoughts that had been given me to think. I was ardently attached to my religion, and sincerely enthusiastic about the Jesuit Order. Every day I thanked God for the happiness and honour He had bestowed upon me in making me a Jesuit.

But, on the other hand, I had not yet begun to think for myself, and I was still unconscious of the presence within me of a strange disrupting force, a critical sense, an independence of will and action that boded ill for my future religious life. Little did I suspect that the new ideas and new experiences which awaited me would stimulate my thinking and put me in sharp conflict with the kind of life I was leading. Had I duly appraised the significance of the "beer" or "hockey ball" incidents, I might have known that critical times lay ahead.

One experienced old Jesuit seemed to suspect that there was *something* in me which was going to evolve as a cause of trouble, but he was unable to analyse what the *something* was. He called it "obstinacy" but he was unable to indicate to me a single instance of real obstinacy in my conduct. It may have been that he vaguely detected the presence of a moral sense that would in time shake itself free from the emotional religiosity in which it lay embedded. Before

he died, from his sick-bed he sent me a letter urging me to ponder over one of his favourite parables. It was that of the juryman who being in an opposition of one, accused the other eleven of being obstinate.

The noviceship will ever remain associated in my mind with a tragic last scene in the room of the novice master, Father James Murphy, which took place on the eve of my departure from Tullabeg. Custom imposed upon me the duty of going to him to ask his blessing upon the new work that lay before me. It was a duty that was distasteful to me but I went none the less, and throwing myself upon my knees in his presence I begged his blessing. I looked into his face as I did so. It was the face of the man whom for two years I had obeyed with respect as God's representative. Under his rule I had done no wrong; I had given no ill example; I had betrayed no trust. "One of my best, if not my very best," he had said of me once. Yet, in the course of his direction of me he had come to fear or to hate some instinct that was in me and not in himself. Once he had hurt me cruelly by making a slighting reference to my mother. On another occasion when my brother had written me to ask if he might be allowed to visit me, Father Murphy had refused me permission *even to answer the letter*. I knelt at his feet now in a posture of humility. It was in his power to send me away from Tullabeg with a glad and confident heart . . . or?

"Father! I have come to ask your blessing as I am to leave for Louvain in the morning." There followed a long pause. Then something that seemed half a sneer and half an expression of hate oozed up in his full fleshy face and his lower lip fell a little. "Give you my blessing?" he said. "No! Begone without my blessing. I would never give my blessing to one like you!" My heart stopped. Had I heard aright? What meant this awful thing that my superior had just said? What black doubt was this rising in my mind? I staggered to my feet, reached blindly for the door, and fled. Sheer horror filled my soul. Had I been living under a bad man for two years who all the while was posing as the Christ? Where was the evil? In myself or in him? But I had done no wrong . . . I was loyal to the core . . . my soul was clean as driven snow. . . . Why, then, was the blessing refused me?

CHAPTER V

LOUVAIN

ON my way to Louvain I travelled by the night boat from Harwich to Antwerp. For the first time since my entrance into the Society of Jesus I found myself, for a brief spell, my own master. I had a few shillings in my pocket, given me with my ticket for the journey, and it was quite thrilling to be at liberty to order a cup of coffee and a sandwich when I felt hungry. It was no less wonderful to be at liberty to stay up all night and talk to strangers. So I spent the whole night on deck and made a magic contact with what was for me a new world of sights and sounds. It was glorious to hear the thudding of unseen engines, and to glimpse for a fleeting moment, when the gathering fog yielded a little, a star overhead or a ship's light passing by.

The night was full of adventures for me. The fog finally became thick and nasty. Presently the darkness was filled with raucous shrieking sirens, and boats were at the captain's orders lowered to the water level. More than once I thought danger was

threatening for I could hear voices calling from other ships, but the chief element of my adventure was not the nearness of a collision but the story told me by a quiet little man who introduced himself to me on the deck. His was a weird tale to hear in the dampness and coldness of midnight channel fog. "I was a poor boy working on a farm in the south of Ireland," he said, "when a strange vision came to me. In the vision I *saw* and *heard* a great Lutheran evangelist calling me to Berlin. I hardly knew where Berlin was at the time. I saw him surrounded by a group of nobles and rich people, and then I saw him leading me to the front of the group so that I should address the assembly. I read in his eyes that he would help me and I knew from that moment that a divine mission was entrusted to me." Then the little man told me how he had set out penniless for Berlin, and how he had found the great evangelist there, and how with his co-operation he had founded a world-wide organizaation. He showed me sewn on the lapel of his coat a few of the many royal orders that had since been conferred upon him. From him I learned for the first time of the White Slave Traffic, and of the Travellers' Protection Societies which had, through his instrumentality, been set up to combat its activities.

When his long and interesting story with the details of his travels and sufferings was over, and when at length we parted, a bright greyness in the east was

heralding the approach of day. Alone I watched the stubborn battle of the sun to proclaim his dominion over the waste of mist and darkness. Presently the Dutch embankments were faintly visible and my heart began to throb with excitement at the thought of Louvain, that ancient benign school of learning, which was beckoning me with a welcome in her eyes. She seemed to be promising me many good gifts: clear understanding and courage to stand fearlessly for justice. Louvain would, I told myself, form and mould my mind and character, and make of me, if I did my part, a scholar, a saint and a kindly human.

At the wharf in Antwerp I was joined by an Irish Jesuit who had preceded me to Belgium. He was very young and his face was as innocent as the angels of the old masters. Together we tramped the rough pavements of the great Flemish port, saw the peasants in blouses and sabots, watched powerful teams of dogs drawing loads of vegetables, and glanced into *estaminets* (cafés) where men sat drinking great jugs of beer. Everything was novel and entrancing. We heard the eternal sweetness of the cathedral carillon, and marvelled at the delicate tracery in the stone work of the halls and churches. We visited the museum, going from gallery to gallery, hastening at times with closed eyes. For the first time I *felt* the beauty in a picture as I stood spellbound before a famous Rembrandt. From the museum we went on to churches.

Everywhere we were confronted with high art in the carving of pulpits, in tapestries, and in the adornment of ceiling and pillars. It was comforting to find that Catholic medieval art, about which we had read and heard so much, abounded so near our future home.

We arrived at the Jesuit house at Antwerp in time for dinner and were welcomed with a hospitality that was at once novel and delightful. Laughingly I sipped the fine red wine which was supplied me in a large bottle placed by my plate. All the fathers were drinking wine and they chatted gaily as they drank. There were strange dishes, veal with yellowish sauce over it, omelettes with jam and apple sauce, fish that seemed uncooked, and enormous heaps of deliciously sweet crackers, sugared and sticky. There was abundance of fruit, peaches and grapes. It was a gay feast, and pleasantly noisy, and I thought it far removed from the solemn formality of the celebrations at Tullabeg. But it did not end without an incident.

I had glanced during dinner at my companion, the young Jesuit with the angel face and noticed that he looked preoccupied. For a moment I recalled that he had blushed and seemed confused when passing through the galleries of the museum. Then I wondered what was troubling him. It was a little later that he cried out above the din of the feast: "I'm choking;

I want a priest!" The poor fellow had some slight difficulty with a fishbone and his tremulous conscience had pricked and terrified him. There was an immediate rush to his rescue and he was helped out to the college infirmary where he soon recovered. The rather coarse-grained Belgians were tickled by the incident, and the story of *l'Irlandais* who cried for a priest went the rounds.

A few days later I found myself standing upright, silent and expectant, in line with other Jesuits at long wooden desks, while a dark-complexioned professor solemnly mounted a rostrum to open his course of lectures on logic. Meanwhile a young scholastic, the beadle (*bidellus*) of the class, who had conducted him from his room, placed books on the rostrum and retired to a front seat where he recited aloud the *Ave Maria.* At the *Amen* there was much noise as the fifty students, all Jesuits save a few Carmelites, sat down at their places, opened their inkwells and arranged their notebooks. Meanwhile the professor, Père Jansens, pressed his biretta down on his head till it reached his eyebrows, folded his hands, scowled at the ceiling, windows, and the wall that faced him, grimaced once or twice, and began . . . "*Agitur igitur*" . . . My course of studies at Louvain had begun.

Good Latin flowed in a plentiful stream from Père Jansens' lips; it washed to and fro before us descrip-

tions and definitions and explanations of a mysterious thing called the "objective concept." As he spoke I glanced around, and one glance sufficed to reveal to me the setting in which I was destined to spend about four thousand hours, listening to theological and philosophical lecturing. The desks were hard and uncomfortable and would always be so. The walls were bare, save for a saint's picture and a crucifix, and somewhat discoloured—and they would always be so in every Jesuit college. The windows were high and narrow and bereft of outlook; there was dust in the atmosphere. My companions sat tense and rigid, listening to the drip-drip of the falling Latin. Here and there I could see hands raised nervously to throbbing heads; here and there eyes turned lovingly on small pious pictures placed as markers in books; on all sides there were manifestations of docile attentiveness. Never would there be outbursts of frivolity, as in university classes; never outspoken protests, or cynical indiscipline. The setting during the thousands of hours before me was to be that of a school of perfection as well as of a hall of science, and that setting exemplified the Church's belief that the mind is most acute, and achieves most, when like a bird in a cage, celibate and repressed, it looks out of a still and silent body.

I had prepared for class by reading pages and pages of Latin about the concept, but I was in despair!

What was it . . . something . . . nothing . . . shapeless . . . bodyless . . . real . . . non-existent . . . yet significant? There was nothing I could call to mind which helped me to understand what it was. And Père Jansens seemed to know so much about it that he could talk about it forever! He held it up and he pulled it to pieces. He looked at it from above and from behind. He made grimaces at it as though it were a doll. He gesticulated, and ridiculed caustically the philosophers who denied its existence. Gentle though he was, as I soon came to know, he grew angry and nasty when dealing with sceptics. I understood his words but what he wished to convey did not reach me. I felt disturbed and frightened. What was wrong with me that I was not blessed with an understanding of this "objective concept"? My ignorance seemed to be a kind of sin in me!

Before the end of class a sudden cry aroused me. The beadle had said something which I missed. Père Jansens took no notice but went on explaining and explaining. The beadle had cried aloud: "*Ultimum Quadrans*," which means, "the last quarter hour." This period was supposedly devoted to questions asked and answered in the vernacular, but it was seldom that professors interrupted their discourses to allow questions. Presently a bell rang loudly and then at last Père Jansens stopped and mopped his brow. Another *Ave Maria* and we dispersed.

As the days passed and the routine of study and class, class and study grew on me, the old irresponsible feeling of schooldays at Clongowes returned. I was once more a schoolboy, though twenty-four years old. From sitting on wooden benches in class-rooms my soutane was worn and shiny; my notes accumulated; exams hovered in the distance like ugly spectres; holidays came as sunbursts; professors were classified now as masters had been at Clongowes; some subjects were marked off as interesting while others were marked down dull. The same reactions occurred when on rare occasions the professor made a joke as when at Clongowes a master made one . . . "counterfeited glee" reappeared. And meanwhile that cold, dry system of learning, that elaborate mathematic of dogma and definition that is called "scholasticism," entered painfully.

The strain was great. Scholastics complained of headaches. Once in a while there was a break-down. I saw a young Belgian spring suddenly to his feet in class and start in an excited manner to refute the professor. He turned his back on him and declaimed with dilated eyes against the Aristotelian categories. His classmate led him away. A weak brain and a strained nervous system had crashed under the ordeal of metaphysics.

On occasion the nerves of a professor would fail him and his morale would collapse. Once, to my

shame and horror, my favourite professor lost his head. In the presence of fifty religious, some ten of whom were non-Jesuits, at great length, in the vernacular, he related the vulgarest of Belgian *histoires jaunes*, a modern version of "Aladdin's Lamp." The Belgian scholastics enjoyed the episode enormously, for they were far from squeamish. More frequently the professors relieved their nerves by outbursts of venomous vituperation against Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill.

The close connection between the Latin language and scholastic philosophy interested me. Definitions which in Latin were quite imposing lost much of their weight when translated into English. Besides, whereas the Latin definitions were gems of precision, the English versions were of necessity loose and weak. It was significant that the students who were most fluent in speaking Latin invariably made the best display in examinations. Scholastic ideas were so tightly fitted in the Latin words that hid and compressed them that they could never be seen in their nakedness. In spite, however, of a vague suspicion that "suggestion" played a part in the seeming clarity of Latin definitions and that there was some intangible sleight-of-hand in the winning of consent to conclusions based on premises that were *assumed* to be self-evident, I accepted whole-heartedly the doctrines I was taught. I was jealous of my reputation as a "good

scholastic," and studied carefully how to refute modern philosophy.

Among the students I won fame for hard work and strict observance. It was said of me that I was *un travailleur acharné.* I rose every morning at four with the most fervent of the community. I was at my desk working before seven, having made my hour's meditation, heard mass, received communion and breakfasted in the meantime. Even in the depth of winter I never lit a stove in my room but contented myself with a red blanket around my feet (all our handkerchiefs and blankets were red) and an old capote over my shoulders while I studied. I hated the dirt engendered by the stove and the waste of time entailed keeping it alight. The Belgian brethren never understood how I endured the cold. Often in the morning I found that the holy water in the font above my head and the ink in my inkwell were frozen.

I combined, as far as I could, the philosophy I was learning with my religion. Thus, having read Lessius on the attributes of God, in preparation for the theodicy treatise, I used to meditate at prayer on his lofty argument. Also I combined the French which I was rapidly acquiring with my devotions. I said my prayers, and wrote hymns, in French. This synthetizing of religion with philosophy and language showed a practical turn in my character . . . it showed also, though at the time I did not know it,

that I desired to see religion endowed with some utilitarian value.

As the years passed I came to love Louvain with its dainty shops and narrow-paved streets; its ancient shrines, and quaint market-places. I knew only a little about its historical associations, but such as I knew bound my heart to it. There my favourite saint, John Berchmans, had lived a life of heroic virtue. His heart was preserved in a splendid silver monstrance on the altar of our college chapel. Justus Lipsius, the famous humanist, belonged to Louvain, Bellarmine, too, and a host of great theologians and scholars. The Irish Franciscan monastery had sheltered the best spirits of Ireland in the penal days. There were treasures in the library; the Hôtel de Ville seemed the work of a giant jeweller rather than of a mason, so fine and detailed was its finish; the spire of St. Gertrude, near the old canal, was rayed through with the light of day. Along the streets trotted the children and women in noisy sabots; abbés in broad-brimmed hats and mantillas and Walloon students with gaily coloured fez caps hurried by. At night student roisterers, tipsy from long bouts of beer-drinking, sang provincial songs as they made their way home through the lamp-lit streets. Primitive still, in those days, slow and slovenly though its inhabitants were, the little ancient city was noble and eminent. It was like a sturdy barge, roughly but

skilfully fashioned, out of date but still useful, honoured for the many gales it had weathered and the many travellers it had safely carried, a thing that no good man would dare destroy.

After two years of study I returned for a few days to Dublin to present myself for a secular examination in philosophy in the National University of Ireland. I obtained first place with the highest honours and as a result my superior, the Irish Jesuit provincial, gave me the privilege of spending two additional years at Louvain and of taking my doctorate degree there at the modern college founded by his Eminence, Cardinal Mercier. At the Mercier college I decided to specialize in experimental psychology under the direction of Professor Albert Michotte. I took as subject of my research, the happenings in the mind when a "choice" is made, and for two years I was to be found almost every afternoon working in the finely equipped laboratory of the college.

In the course of this long and careful research, pursued under the most strictly scientific methods, I felt the thrill of enthusiasm that belongs to the pursuit of new knowledge. It was a hunt, an adventure, in hitherto untravelled regions. Authority and *a priori* reasoning were here of no account. It was my part to record the behaviourism of the mind—as found in their introspections—when my subjects were subjected to the carefully arranged choices devised by

Professor Michotte. For the first time I felt the delight of seeking and finding knowledge where it had lain hidden. It was something quite different from having knowledge that was already in the possession of many, that was already fully masticated, handed down to me to be swallowed without question. My experience in this laboratory gave me confidence and gave me a sense of the seriousness of natural science. It gave me besides an enduring respect for men who prove themselves worthy the name of scientists. It did not at the time conflict in the least with my religious life, though it must have laid the foundation for my later habit of being very exacting when there was question of the validity of proofs.

The thesis which was the outcome of my research was published in London by Longmans, Green & Co., and created a favourable impression on English psychologists. I called it by the rather stilted title, *Motive Force and Motivation Tracts.* Everywhere the precision of the method employed was praised. Among ecclesiastics, however, it awakened considerable misgivings. It was thought to be inimical to the old proofs of the freedom of the will. In particular, American Jesuits were disturbed and they denounced the book at Rome and demanded that it should be re-examined. Re-examination, however, resulted in its complete and official vindication. Meanwhile the doctorate of philosophy was conferred upon me at

Louvain.

The reaction of Jesuits of my own province to my thesis surprised me. I was still an idealist as regarded every phase of religious life and I envisaged my Order as a family of loving and sympathetic brothers. I expected that my brethren would be glad of my success and hearten me to further efforts by their encouragement. But I was disappointed. Only a few took the trouble to read my book. Two or three were generous in their praise. The rest made it the subject of jokes and sarcasm. My provincial opposed its publication at first on the ground that not a single copy would ever be sold. His fears proved groundless, for the one edition published was sold out. Some Jesuit superiors ordered copies from me for their libraries but never paid for them. In general, my brethren made light of the effort I had made by repeating *ad nauseam* the story that a certain secular priest, who had a car, wrote to Longmans, Green & Co., for the book on *Motor Traffic* written by an Irish Jesuit called Barrett.

At Louvain I made the acquaintance of the celebrated Father Veermersch S. J. In recent years, as a leading professor at Rome, he has become famous for his efforts to liberalize the doctrine of the Church having to do with hygiene and sex. Veermersch was in stature a small man, always busy and hurried, engaged in a hundred different avocations; pious to

his finger-tips; mortified; zealous; and always carrying a fixed, muscular smile, which save for the kindly twinkling of his grey eyes would have seemed grotesque. Doors banged in his wake, and the ground shook from the hard strong patter of his little feet. Words shot like bullets out of his mouth and the bristles of his ill-shaven face stood erect. He was all iron and machine. "Touf-touf" he was called by his brethren, from his general resemblance to a primitive engine. It was said that King Albert of Belgium was much under his influence, while, on the other hand, he was so liberal that Belgian socialists (the bitterest of anti-clericals) loved him. He contributed to the Catholic Encyclopedia, and I had the difficult task of turning some of his mongrel French into English. From trying to converse in every language he mixed up and forgot the characteristics of each, and finally could speak no language with accuracy. Once, having made my confession to him, he thought it well to give me a word of advice in English. "*Mortificate yourself*," he counselled me, "*and go in pieces!*"

The old-fashioned "devout humanistic" Jesuit was also to be found at Louvain. One of them, a Père Romanes, was prominent in my time as the spiritual father of the community. It was his custom to divide the pious discourses which it was his duty to address to the Community into *three points* . . . the

first point . . . the second point . . . the third point. Taking the first point he would divide it again into three points, and so on. So accustomed were we to this method that we failed to conceive of the possibility of Père Romanes departing from it. But he made that departure on one famous occasion, when he discoursed on his favourite saint, Aloysius. He asked us to consider the outstanding virtues of the angelic young Jesuit. We, of course, were prepared to hear that they were three in number. Père Romanes set about enumerating them. The first . . . the second . . . that was all right, the third . . . (here he was going to stop of course) . . . but no! He went on to *the fourth.* Everyone sat up. The fifth came . . . then the sixth . . . eyes were opened and there were gasps. Then seventh, eighth . . . ninth . . . when would the outstanding virtues come to an end? When, having surpassed the wildest expectations, we heard the words "*thirteenth and last virtue,*" even the steadiest nerves gave way and loud laughter with subdued applause broke out. It was one of the few occasions on which I saw a Jesuit community abandoning decorum in the chapel.

My four years at Louvain came to its due end. Louvain had been an Alma Mater in a true sense and I was sad at leaving. I had found in it learning, hospitality and much goodness and kindness. The little faults that at first I had resented in my Bel-

gian brethren I came in the end to understand and condone. They were simple brave fellows, *les Belges,* and friendly in their rough, practical way. It was nice to have known them and to have shared life's hardships with them.

My last night was spent at the window of my room, overlooking a garden, at the extreme end of which stood the tower in which Jansenius had lived and composed his dark heresy. The sky was lit up by fitful flashes of lightning, and I could see sharply outlined many graceful spires, and along the distant Lys tall bare poplars glimmered momentarily. I felt grateful to God for having in His providence brought me to Louvain, and to "The Seat of Wisdom," my mother Mary, for the help she had afforded me in my studies. I knew that my time had been well spent, and that my doctorate of philosophy and my scientific treatise on psychology were achievements of which I could honestly be proud.

Looking into the future I rejoiced that I should soon see my mother and brother in Dublin, and that my next years would be spent teaching at my old Alma Mater, Clongowes. After that would follow theological studies and the priesthood, the great consummation of all! The future seemed rosy in my eyes. I had no misgivings and no fears. My dreams were being realized one by one. I was gradually being prepared to do battle, as I trusted victoriously,

for the cause of Christ. My faith was strong and unsullied and I needed only to keep in God's good favour. With a heart full of high hope and optimism, I watched the last flashes of lightning illuminate the now silent old city, and as the storm passed lay down to sleep and to dream of a happy journey over a silver sea.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHING AT CLONGOWES

I WANT to take down your names, and please keep the same places in class for the present, until we get to know one another. What is your name (to the fair-headed, blue-eyed boy in the first seat)?" "Mathy Bodkin, sir." "And yours, please?" . . . this to a thin, speckle-faced boy with shrewd perky eyes . . . "Eddie Coyne, sir." "And yours?" A tall strong boy with an open manly face, replied, "Maurice Dowling, sir." In all there were twenty names to record, and twenty faces to remember.

"Will you distribute this set of books, please, Bodkin and Coyne?" Forthwith the two boys mentioned approached the desk and each taking half the books distributed them to the class. Other books were in due course distributed, and the first lesson began. It consisted in a brief description of the work that lay before the class for the year. There were so many hundred lines of poetry to be learned; so many years of Irish and English history; so many pages of lit-

erature and so forth. "The course is very short and easy," I said, smiling at gasps of protest from the boys. "Besides, there is no reason why every boy should not pass the exam at the end of the year with distinction. I expect," I continued, "that this class will be the first in all Ireland and that all medals and prizes to be distributed by the Board of Education will be won by the members of this class."

All the boys looked up with astonishment, tickled by the idea that they were going to succeed so brilliantly, and at the time little dreaming that they would actually succeed in achieving what I put before them.

I rather enjoyed my first hour of teaching and sensed that the boys were easy to like and that it would not be difficult to be interested in their work and essays. Their fresh young faces were an inspiration, and the fact that they recognized spontaneously my authority reassured me on the point that I should have no need to use threats or to simulate anger. Just to work along with them in perfect friendliness, stimulating them to effort by showing them how much they were capable of, would be my line of policy. Meanwhile I should work hard myself to assemble facts wherewith to make my explanations interesting. It would be pleasant to live on friendly terms with these boys, having no favourites, but being the special friend of all, bringing them for walks,

lending them good books, telling them about life and imparting to them such ideas as I had on social problems and national questions.

It was delightful to be again at my old Alma Mater, no longer as a boy, but now as a master; no longer awestruck at the sight of a black robe but now actually garbed in one myself; no longer tied down by narrow bounds, and obliged to "line up" for this duty and that when the bell rang, but free to roam about the countryside that I loved and to retire to my room and study when the spirit moved me. It was good to be able to reverse the kind of training I had resented in my own case: the old-fashioned discipline of threat and coercion; and to experiment on winning better and surer results from methodical and sincere encouragement and sympathy. It would be fine to help the boys under my charge to think for themselves and to be independent. It would be fine also to give them such insight as was possible at their age into the real problems of life; here I knew that my experience as a Vincent de Paul worker in the slums of Dublin and as an employee of Guinness's Brewery would prove useful.

Things conspired to put me in right with the boys. I had almost forgotten about cricket during my long absence from the game, but soon it came home to me that cricket retained all its glamour at Clongowes and that the surest way into a Clongownian's esteem is to

manifest prowess with bat or ball. And so within a few days after the opening of the term, it got noised among the boys, for some of them had seen me at the nets, that "the new English master" was a stunner at cricket.

I found the boys were exceedingly sensitive to criticism of what they wrote in their English essays. Some of them were gifted with bright imaginations and considerable taste in style. The good libraries at Clongowes were well availed of, and there was a prevailing interest in reading. To cultivate this taste I used to devote one of my classes each week to reading out extracts from the essays the boys had written and in explaining the principles on which I gave marks. No matter how immature a writer was I took pains to find a few good sentences or phrases in his work which I held up for admiration. Under the stimulus of encouragement the boys wrote longer and better essays. I taught them the art of writing, "short, simple sentences" (S. S. S.); of introducing names of places and historical or literary personages; of building "pictures" and descriptions; of introducing their subject lightly and indirectly; and of getting a certain polish into their style. Often they sent in excellent work that it was a real pleasure to read. And as a reward for merit, besides occasional small prizes, with the permission of the Dean I gave special classes to the most deserving boys. All the while I myself

was learning; learning history in expounding it; literature in commenting upon it; and style in analysing it for the benefit of my class. This idea, that "teaching is learning," so got possession of my mind that one afternoon I sat down and wrote an article entitled "How to Complete One's Education" (namely, by teaching), which was at once accepted by a foremost English review.

It was bright and healthy to live thus surrounded by young minds that were keen and full of humour. It was my first experience of authority, but soon I forgot to think of my position in terms of authority. It was my first thoroughly extrovert occupation, and immense advantage came to me from it. It was my first intimacy with the souls and minds of others, for I was the recipient of the confidences of my boys, and I learned at least something of the complexity of human motives. It was also, for my fervour as a Jesuit was still undiminished, consoling and good work, which was easily presentable to my divine Master. Were not many of my boys going to follow me into the Order, and what better proof could I have than that the work was good? Still, in it all, I was working along the trail of my own idea and developing though unconsciously my native independence of judgment.

New ideas were just then (1911-1914) stirring in Ireland. The people were beginning to awake from

a long lethargy of despondency. The labour movement, under the able guidance of James Connolly and the fiery eloquence of James Larkin, had gotten under way, and working-men everywhere were growing restless under the shocking injustice of their treatment at the hands of employers. A scholarly group of Irishmen had organized clubs to revive Gaelic traditions and the Gaelic language, believing in the theory that the national spirit is bound up in the national language and customs. Another group of reformers was urging the cause of temperance, realizing that as long as Ireland lay in the slough of drunkenness there was little hope for her to become great or prosperous. Still others, politically minded, were beginning to criticize the policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party in wasting time and money by their perfectly futile operations in the English capital. With Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Fein, as their philosopher, they preached the gospel of resistance to England *on Irish soil.*

There were repercussions of all these ideas in Clongowes, and among the community one earnest, handsome young Jesuit, Joseph Walsh, was the advocate of the "new things." Walsh was born amid the picturesque and bold mountains of Tipperary, and imbibed the gay and fearless spirit of his countrymen of the South. He was resolute and daring, and won the affection of a considerable following of the more

serious-minded boys at Clongowes. He founded a temperance organization, and from that he went on to encourage among them the study of Gaelic. Presently, when things in the political world began to move more quickly, he kept the boys informed about the progress of the national movement. All the while his conduct was exemplary, his classes went ahead, his work was well done, but he was sinking deeper and deeper into the sin that was unpardonable in the eyes of his superiors: he was thinking for himself and becoming a leader.

It was not long before a deep friendship, based on community of thought and interests, sprang up between myself and Joseph Walsh. We worked together to awaken patriotism in the boys, and to give them an interest in the welfare of the country. The opposition that Walsh was experiencing was having an effect upon his health. He grew thin and pale and nervous deafness began to afflict him. It was, however, some comfort for him to have one to talk to whom he could trust, and many were the evenings he spent in my room discussing the ideas that had set his mind aflame.

Late one night—the memory remains vivid—he and I climbed to the roof of the castle tower and swept with glasses the distant hills overlooking the coast. It was soon after the famous gun-running episode when Sir Edward Carson and his North of Ire-

land lieutenants had armed the Orangemen to fight on the side of England against the southern Irish. In retaliation the Southerners had resolved to import arms, and I had heard from my brother, Joe, that on this particular night there was to be a landing of guns at a little harbour in County Wicklow. Joe, armed with a revolver, was to take part in the enterprise. Walsh and I knew that if the Government got wind of the affair there would be fighting and bloodshed. We were glad then, as we watched from the tower that midnight, that there were no rockets or flares sent up, nor any sign of shooting, for the stillness of the night meant that the landing of arms had been safely effected, as proved to be the case.

In teaching the boys love of country, and telling them of the daring deeds but frustrated hopes of Irish patriots, I found myself in contact with a new element that was strange and powerful. The passion of nation-consciousness when awakened is incalculable in its effects. In stirring it up among the boys, I myself was swept away. I knew it was a good and purifying love, that of country. I knew that it inspired self-sacrifice and effort. But I had not realized how disturbing an element it could become in the heart of a religious. Why was it unsafe, I asked myself, for a religious to love his country? Why was religious observance, in the strict sense, incompatible with patriotism? Here was a holy intoxication, a selfless,

noble emotion, which did not seem to fit in with asceticism. I began to feel that I was playing with fire in allowing love of country to enter my heart, and I noticed in the strained face of my friend, Joseph Walsh, that he too was suffering the same ordeal.

From time to time the monotony of school life was broken by the announcement of a "play day." At such a proclamation wild cheers went up from the boys. There was a stampede to dormitories to get caps and coats, and to the candy shop to get supplies of edibles, and then the various classes used to gather in groups awaiting the master who was to take them for a walk. When the master appeared his class gathered round him and all set off together across country. After a while some of the boys fell back a little, others went on far in advance towards the destination determined on, while the rest kept in a group around the master asking him questions and chatting with him about subjects of all kinds. It was on occasions such as these that a master had his best opportunity to impart his own ideas and his own philosophy to the boys.

One day with such a group I was standing on a bridge over the Liffey River at one of its beautiful curves among the meadows and beech groves near Straffan. The boys were tired after a long walk and were lazying listlessly on the sides of the bridge gazing into the water. Suddenly a paper bag appeared

floating on the surface of the river. It was a small bag, such as is used in candy stores. It brought to my mind a sad interview I had had a few years before with a poor widow in the slums of Dublin who made a living for herself and her three children by piecing together these paper bags. I called the attention of the boys to the bag and asked them if they ever thought about the poor folk who work in factories. Then I told them my story about the little widow.

To make these bags was the only work she could get in Dublin. Her room in a tenement cost her forty cents a week. She had to feed and clothe herself and her children as best she could. For making a thousand bags she was paid about eight cents. No matter how hard she worked she could not make more than ten thousand bags in the week. Her eyes were tired and sore; she looked wretched and emaciated; her children were mere skeletons. Yet for years she had dragged along in her misery, considering herself fortunate, nevertheless, to have regular work even though it was paid so badly. I described the extreme poverty of her little room, and told them of her joy and delight when through a charitable organization I was able to obtain for her a weekly grant of sixty additional cents.

The bag had by this time drifted far down the river. The boys had watched it floating away. Suddenly they had all become grave, for the thing I had

told them was new and terrible to them. The autumn leaves that toppled from the beech trees suggested perchance to them the gold that they wished to see poured into the widow's lap. "Isn't it wrong," said one of them, "that so much money should be in the hands of a few, while so many are allowed to starve?" "I had no idea," said another, "that such conditions existed in Dublin. Why are we not told about things like that?" There were tears in the eyes of a third boy, a quiet little fellow, the son of a widow who was barely able to pay for his education at Clongowes. Later in the evening this boy came to me and asked me if it would be permissible to make a collection among the rest for the poor woman whose story I had told.

The reaction of the boys to information about real facts of life seemed healthier than their reactions to the pious stories and fables that they heard from the pulpit. To hear about the hardships suffered by the poor in their own towns and cities awakened profounder feeling than the hearing of tales about dying negroes on the slave ships that St. Peter Claver served. In a more or less uninterested way the boys would subscribe money for foreign missions, but when they were grouped together in a Club, as I found it possible later to group them, to organize entertainments for homeless men and women in Dublin, they entered with zest and humanity into the work.

This club, once afoot, became "A Social Study Club" and lasted for many years. It developed in time into a Clongowes social enterprise in Dublin devoted to the care of newspaper and messenger boys of the poorest class.

The reality of the social problem was felt acutely at Clongowes a little later when a strike occurred among the college servants. These servants were for the most part labourers' sons, of little education and of uncouth manners. Their working hours were from six A. M. till ten P. M. daily, with an intermission in the afternoon of an hour or two allowed them to play handball. They were held under an iron hand by a Jesuit lay-brother, and made to conform to a schedule of religious duties. Their meals were supplied them, and if they were lucky they got some cast-off clothes, but they received on an average only a dollar a week wages. They got no training and left the college service as ignorant as they came.

These poor men and boys, fortunately for themselves, joined the Workers' Transport Union under the leadership of Connolly and Larkin. When the time came they were told to strike for better pay. They did not like taking such action at Clongowes where their employers were priests, but it was pointed out to them that the college was rich and prosperous (as indeed it was) and that an injustice is no less an injustice when it is done by priests. So they struck.

Then to my shame and horror they were treated in a cruel way. They were threatened, browbeaten, and finally thrown out. Their very moderate and just demands were termed *socialistic and sinful.* The Jesuits in charge could not tolerate having their injustice pointed out to them by "scoundrels," "atheists" and "agitators," which were the terms applied to the strike leaders. In the end, after much victimization the "misguided" among them, that is, the penitent and weak-kneed, were taken back, and as "an act of grace" a trifling increase of wages was allowed.

It seemed as though I was fated to be afflicted with problems of the most trying kind. Here was I, a young Jesuit, enamoured of my religion and my vocation, working my best for the spiritual good of the boys I was teaching, and at the same time trying to lead a perfect religious life, yet pestered with one problem after another. To do good, to make the boys manly and selfless, I had stirred up their patriotism, only to find myself caught in a vortex that shook my old ideas of asceticism. To make the boys human and kind-hearted I opened their minds to the conditions under which labour existed in Ireland, only to find that the worst offenders among the employers were my own spiritual superiors. It had cheered me to find in my friend, Joseph Walsh, a brave protagonist of progress, but his spirit had been crushed within two years and he had quitted the Jesuit Order

broken in health. Then, there was a more personal, a deeply tantalizing problem, that of my connection with my relatives. I had not, I could not, shake off the love for them that was rooted in my heart. I could not see wrong in loving my mother and brothers, yet I found that this love was "unholy" in a religious. Slowly it had come home to me that Jesuit asceticism was in sharp conflict with family affection. One could not be the ideal Jesuit, such as I aspired to be, unless one definitely turned one's back upon home and home ties. This I found I could not honourably do. Still, in spite of these troublous problems which vexed my peace of mind, I went steadily ahead, working with all my energy, and extraordinarily happy in the delightful environment of Clongowes life.

It was important for me, seeing that I was making so great demands upon the co-operation of the boys in various directions, to work upon their imaginations by such feats on the field of sport as I was capable of. I used to play football, hockey and cricket with them and assist them in their games against visiting teams. To score a goal or two, to hit up a century against "a team from Dublin" was a vast achievement in the eyes of the boys and increased my influence over them. They were all the more ready to do big things asked of them by a master who could, as it seemed to them, do big things him-

self. If I succeeded in getting a lot out of the boys I was teaching, it was largely because they, on their side, got a lot out of me. If I made them do "better than their best," win first places in all-Ireland exams, and spend time and money during their vacations in doing social work, they made me do "better than my best" on the cricket field and elsewhere. While I was leading many of them to heights of idealism and sacrifice, they were making me mount higher all the time. Many of them, as they themselves confessed, gave up their lives to enter the Jesuit Order on account of the inspiration they got from me; and on my part, I knew no sacrifice that I was not ready to make in order to help them. It was all a curious kind of generous co-operation on a very high plane.

When they needed a big effort on my part to win a game of football or cricket, I found it in me to make the effort, and often I felt astonished afterwards when I went over in my mind all that had happened.

One of these efforts was occasioned by an unusual combination of circumstances which made a last three minutes of a cricket match memorable in the annals of Clongowes.

Clongowes was playing one of the last games she ever played against a team of the British Military Garrison in Ireland. Feeling against the military was beginning to run high, and this fact in itself gave an added tension to the contest. The day was rainy;

the ground treacherous; it was a bowler's wicket and our side were "all out" for eighty-seven. This was a very small score, even when allowance was made for the wicket, and it gave the military a good chance of winning.

The military, however, only did a little better. And when time was almost up and the last "over" was to be bowled, they had still four runs to make to win, though they had three wickets in hand.

As I remember that famous last over of the game, it went thus. Our bowler bowled the first ball, and it was a bye. No score, no wicket fell. The second ball came along. The batsman ran out to "slog" it, missed, and I who was wicket-keeping, stumped him out. At this point there remained four more balls to be played and we had to capture two more wickets without loss of more than two runs. The third ball came and the new batsman hit it and scored one run.

At this point the excitement of the spectators was terrific. The boys had gathered round the pavilion and among them the members of the community old and young, for all understood and loved cricket. Something electric was in the air. The onlookers felt the tension and expected something extraordinary to happen. Every movement on the field was seen and registered, almost to the stirring of a blade of grass.

The fourth ball of the over was bowled. The bats-

man nervously tipped it. It was just within my reach and I stretched for it. To my intense joy it struck in my glove. The man was caught out. A wild cheer went up. The tension increased a hundredfold. Then came the climax. The last batsman strode in to the wicket. He was a big fellow, a "Tommy," and he swung his bat as though he was going to hit a "sixer" and win the game for the military. As he took "centre" I signalled to our short-leg fielder to draw in a little closer. He was a splendid fielder, a good catch and a fine thrower.

The batsman looked around the field and then waited the coming of the ball. Our bowler was nervous and short-pitched. The batsman swung and caught the ball well on his bat drawing it to leg. The game seemed lost, for such a hit would easily secure a boundary. But our short-leg made a magnificent spring and stopped it. It slipped, however, from his grasp and the batsmen started to run. At mid-wicket, for some reason, they hesitated. Had they run straight, they could easily have made it. The fielder recovered like lightning and hurled in the ball to me. By this time the batsman was rushing back . . . but he was just late. I caught the ball and had the bails off before he was in. A shout from the boys pierced the air. The whole school rushed towards us cheering madly. The game was over and we had won, with a margin of two runs just as *the*

second hand of the pavilion clock was marking the termination of the game!

The Jesuit community among whom I lived during my three years as a master was composed of men who were individually very good, but who had shed most, if not all, of their fervour and asceticism. Nearly all of them were "out for a good time," and intent upon securing privileges and comforts. They were no longer "hungry" for God and the "things of God." They read light fiction and up-to-date magazines rather than spiritual books. To be well-groomed; to win friends among those who visited the college; to tell stories about one another that were lacking in kindliness; these were but a few among the many signs that they had discarded, temporarily at least, their former religious idealism. They smoked (with or without the superior's permission); when possible lay abed late in the mornings; and they ignored the *magnum silentium* and other safeguards of monastic discipline.

Like the rest, I too was affected by the spirit of Clongowes, and I grew careless about finer points of asceticism. I shared in the faults of the community, with the one exception that I kept sternly to rising early and to the old practices of self-mortification. At times of retreat I used to renew my early fervour, but such renewals were short-lived in their effects and before a month would pass the new-won fervour

would wane again. Thus it was that I discovered the difficulty, nay, the impossibility, inherent in the pursuit of the Jesuit ideal of religious perfection while engaged in doing such external work as teaching. While the really "good" boys whom we were training could and did keep on an even level of right behaviour and deviated little from it, we Jesuits were constantly going up and down, in a spiritual seesaw.

My last days as a master at Clongowes are memorable for a trying experience which fell little short of being a tragedy. It was an experience which remained the secret of three, two boys and myself, until circumstances sad enough in themselves removed all motive for secrecy.

It happened one fine summer evening, just before the close of the school year, that two of my most devoted pupils, Jack Gilligan and Mathy Bodkin, found me walking about the grounds, and asked me to take them for a bathe in the Liffey. As they were to leave Clongowes in a few days' time, I stretched a point of discipline and agreed to their request. Jack and Mathy had been in my classes right through my period of teaching, and they were both very brilliant. The former, on arriving at Clongowes, had been broken-hearted at first on learning that he could not have his faithful dog, Nigger, with him at school. The latter, Mathy, was the son of a well-known Irish novelist, Judge Bodkin.

Taking a short-cut through the fields, Jack, Mathy and I soon reached the Liffey, only to find that it was flooded with recent rains. As neither of them could swim, they went up the left bank to a spot where there was a shallow sandy pool. I plunged into a famous deep spot called Wogan's Hole, and as I swam about I heard shouts and splashing in the distance and guessed the boys were enjoying their bathe. But after a while an ominous silence attracted my attention, and swimming in, I climbed the bank. Then a sight caught my eye that I can never forget. At the pool that Jack and Mathy had entered there were four bare white arms piteously waving over the surface . . . nothing else was visible. I prayed as I rushed towards the pool: "Pity, God, pity!" It seemed only a few seconds until I was holding a limp white body, and pulling it. It was Jack Gilligan. To my horror, I could not move it. It was caught in wire which ran across the river to prevent cattle from moving down with the current. After a vain effort to disentangle Jack, I thought of Mathy. "Let me save him first and then return to Jack." Mathy's body was sagging downwards under the surface. I feared he was drowned. Swimming swiftly I brought him to the bank. To my infinite joy he revived at once and began to crawl upwards through the reeds and rushes.

Though almost exhausted by excitement, I returned

to Jack's body. It was free now, and came with me as I swam towards the bank. But I was unable to reach the bank. The current was too much for me in my tired condition. In despair I turned and swam with the current, in a slanting direction, towards the other bank, which seemed a mile away. On a shallow spot in midstream I fell exhausted under my burden. Jack was unconscious. I lifted him again and finally reached the right bank. Mathy, anxious to help, was now wading across.

I turned Jack over. Water poured from his mouth. I worked his arms a little and he opened his eyes. In the struggle his costume had been torn off and he was quite naked. His body glistened in the slanting rays of the sun. "Where am I?" he asked, and then, in a sullen voice, "Where are my clothes?" Now that all danger was passed, nausea overcame me. I lay down and vomited.

When we had dressed we knelt *shyly* and uttered a brief prayer. It was at my suggestion that we did so. I felt no impulse to pray but reasoned that it was the right thing to do. On the way back to the college we compared notes. Mathy said that when he was sinking, "O! God, I am done" came to his lips. Jack said that he just "passed out," without any thought of prayer.

Poor Jack! It was not long before he was to pass out forever. He was killed two years later on the

Flanders front, leading his company into action. A few days before his death he wrote to me. The letter was sad and full of foreboding. He sensed that the end was near, and with more emphasis than ever he referred to his little dog at home, the dog that had been his best pal, Nigger.

CHAPTER VII

MY PRIESTHOOD

THE most trying period of a Jesuit's life is the three years which immediately precede the priesthood. This period is spent in a seminary where, under strict discipline and supervision, theological studies are pursued. The Jesuit, tired after a strenuous teaching career in the colleges, somewhat relaxed in fervour, and "stale" as regards studies, is faced with the unpalatable task of mastering the driest of all sciences, theology. He must, in order to qualify for the priesthood, pass several severe examinations in this science while at the same time he must give proof of virtue by good conduct and "strict observance."

The Jesuit, beginning his theology, is a man of about thirty years of age, formed in character and no longer as docile and pliable as he was in noviceship days. He finds the petty regulations and tyrannies of seminary life irksome and humiliating. After the freedom which he enjoyed and the authority he exercised in the colleges, he resents being treated as a

child. He is now more critical, and less prone to interpret things in their best sense. He has by this time heard and seen many things that have perhaps raised doubts in his mind as to the practicability of religious perfection, and his enthusiasms have cooled considerably. He is liable to fall into depression when things go ill with him, and, as statistics show, he is more liable at this than at any other time to abandon religious life and return to the world.

The fact that theological studies are the immediate preparation for the priesthood, and that they mark the approach of the long-desired day of ordination, does not greatly lighten the burden that oppresses the mind of the Jesuit seminarist. He knows too well how uncertain is the fulfilment of his hope, and how many are the obstacles in his path. As a rule he faces this trying period of three years much as soldiers in the Great War faced their periods in the front lines, by cultivating a kind of sullen *sang-froid* and by avoiding "thinking about things." He makes the most of the few sources of "natural" happiness that are allowed him and tries to discover some harmless hobby that will help him to while away time that hangs heavy on his hands.

The theologate, Milltown Park, to which I was sent in September, 1914, was situated on the outskirts of Dublin, overlooking the small valley of the Dodder and facing the blue uneven hills which fade

into Wicklow. The grounds were spacious and well wooded, but the building itself was cold and forbidding. For nearly fifty years it had been the training ground for Irish Jesuits and at the same time a "spiritual rest home" for secular priests and Catholic laymen who came periodically for "retreats." A narrow gravelled drive which curved round a large field united the old-fashioned entrance with the house. Visitors, as they walked or rode up this drive, were invariably thrown into a state of confusion on approaching the building by the fact that they were under the scrutiny from eyes that peered through each of a hundred or more windows.

The atmosphere of Milltown Park was dull and relaxing. The numerous trees prevented the wind from drifting across the grounds. The walls in winter exuded moisture. Besides, it had the stillness of a churchyard about it, broken only by the occasional tooting of a motor horn or the noise of a train rushing past on the Harcourt Street line which ran west of the property. For me it was a lifeless place and had none of the inspiration of Clongowes. It suggested the lugubrious, rather than the bright and creative side of religion. It had been in olden times the residence of a noble Irish family that had been pursued by misfortune and that, according to legend, lay under a strange curse. And it seemed to me as though something sinister still haunted the place.

Nevertheless, with all the good will I could command, I settled down to make the most of it and to win my way to the great consummation that was to be mine at the end of three years.

It is hardly necessary to describe in detail the type of studies pursued. As in other seminaries, we spent two years at "moral" theology, learning the principles and applications of the great moral theologians, Genicot, Noldin, De Lugo, Sanchez and Lehmkuhl. There were treatises on the Sacraments, on the Church, on Grace, on the Incarnation, and so forth. We studied Canon Law, Scripture, Ecclesiastical History, Liturgy, and some Hebrew. The professors were for the most part learned men, but no one of them, not even the famous Father Peter Finlay, was in any way inspiring. One plodded along from day to day, indifferent to the tediousness of life, ignoring headaches, depressions, intellectual difficulties, with the sole end in view of passing exams and, through ordination, being delivered from the long grind.

For the first time since I entered the Jesuit Order, I found myself up against things. The superior, Father Albert Power S. J., a small man, with the memory of a genius and the character of a child, took a profound dislike to me. He did not find fault with me for any lack of piety or for any neglect of duty on my part, but he thought I manifested too little interest in theology, and he feared my independence of

judgment. He was very pious himself, and loved to spread devotion to "The Little Flower." He had written a booklet about a baby-saint of four years, called *Little Nellie of Holy God,* and he came to be known himself in ecclesiastical circles as "Little Albie." Father Power's hostility, and his unnecessary suspiciousness in my regard, had the inevitable result of forcing me to some extent into opposition to authority. I could not love authority that was not benevolent, and of benevolent authority I had no experience in Milltown Park.

On many occasions Father Power singled me out for attack. Once, when in my room at night, reading and smoking, there came a knock at my door, and without pausing to hear "Come in!" he entered. He glared angrily at me as I rose to my feet. It is true that he caught me *in flagrante delicto,* for I should have been in bed at the time and my light should have been extinguished, but the fault was a common one, and one which should have been dealt with by a minor rather than by the head superior. "You're up," he said, "and you're not in bed, and besides you're smoking!" "Father," I said, "I have permission to smoke, and besides it helps me to sleep." "That's a childish excuse," he rapped out in his squeaky voice; "come to see me in the morning, and put out your light at once." I put out my light, and after he was gone, opened my door and glanced up

the corridor. There were several other lights burning, but they apparently had not excited his ire. In the morning, when I called upon him, he spoke much and with no little venom. I listened in silence, saddened rather than hurt by his display of ill-will. No doubt he interpreted my silence as sullenness, whereas had he really known what was happening, he would have seen that I was silent because I felt that I was standing at the graveside of ideals. I had long clung to the hope that ecclesiastical authority could, in a man of faith like Father Power, be radiant with the beauty of the divine authority it represented, but that hope seemed now doomed to utter disappointment.

The chief enjoyment of Milltown Park was in the companionship of young brother Jesuits, fellow sufferers under the hard régime. A kind of subterranean life was led. Forbidden papers were exchanged; reunions were held *sub rosa;* grievances were discussed; tales of woe were recited and listened to sympathetically—but with jocularity. Were it not for the outlet afforded by such friendly though irregular meetings, the nervous tension would have been almost insupportable. It was human friendship that made it possible for me and others to bear up under the strain and the wearisome routine of the life. On the free days, of which there was at least one every week, we set out in small parties to the hills or to the seaside. The Dublin mountains saved hearts from

breaking. After a day in the bracing air of Tinnehinch or the Scalp or Enniskerry, one could face with renewed energy and hope the coming week. The plain luncheons that we carried tasted like delicious food in the sunshine and breezes of the Three Rock mountain. Sometimes in a glen above Dundrum, where a rivulet of good water flowed, we made a fire and cooked tea in a billy-can. Often we ate our luncheons at the extreme end of the east pier at Dunlaoghaire.

As time wore on, and as my mother, who was living not far from Milltown Park, came to know my young Jesuit friends and our favourite holiday haunts, she used to meet us at our destination and supply dainty additions to our repast. In the basket she invariably carried with her, besides food, cigarettes and newspapers were to be found. After a few minutes chatting with us she would leave us, lest her presence might embarrass us in any way or be the occasion of our getting into trouble through some infringement of religious rules. It was a very great comfort for me, during my time at Milltown Park, to have the happiness of seeing my mother often. I was permitted to visit her once a month, and on occasion more frequently. She sensed that life at Milltown Park was trying, and did all in her power to soften its bitterness. I used not to tell her in detail about the hardships which my companions and I had to en-

dure; about the spirit of gloom and suspicion that prevailed; about the soul-wearing grind of the studies; or the harshness and illiberality of our superiors, but she suspected something of all these things. She had no doubt whatever that I should persevere and be ordained priest in due time, but she realized that tactful encouragement was called for, and she played her part most generously and skilfully. She was quite reconciled now to the idea of my being a priest and was already looking forward with intense longing to being present at my First Mass.

I have often wondered if my mother noticed that some subtle change was coming over me at this time, that the first vague beginnings of disillusionment with religious life had set in? When or how I began to change I cannot determine, but certain it is that while at Milltown Park I found myself at times acting in a new way, in a way that was much less submissive, much less religiously docile.

On one occasion my professor of Hebrew addressed a remark to me in class to the effect that if I did "not *wish* to learn Hebrew" it would be better for me to quit the class. I promptly arose, gathered my books together, and walked towards the door. I knew my own mind perfectly well in respect of Hebrew. I knew I could never be a scholar in the language and did not see any good in having a mere smattering knowledge of it. The professor was

dumbfounded. "Where are you going?" he asked. "I am leaving the class," I answered. "Go back to your place!" he shouted. "But I don't *wish* to learn Hebrew," I responded. "Go back to your place!" he repeated. Immediately after class he rushed to the superior to report me for insubordination. I was sent for and explained calmly that I had been invited to leave the class if I did not wish to learn Hebrew, and that as I did not wish to learn Hebrew, I had set about leaving the class. The superior was taken aback by my attitude, and thought it best to rebuke the professor rather than me.

On another occasion I absented myself from a "sermon class." The class was not at all an important one, and it often happened that theologians absented themselves from it on flimsy pretexts. One evening I felt tired and remained in my room. A few minutes after, the professor came to my room and, finding me there, said: "You should be in class. This is *scandalous conduct!*" "Perhaps I should be at class," I answered, "but I object to the term 'scandalous conduct,' my conduct is not scandalous." He hurried forthwith to the superior to complain of my insubordination. When sent for I took the same line as on the previous occasion, and maintained that scandalous conduct was an improper term to apply to my omission. The superior, Father Power, said nothing but made up his mind to "break

my will," a project that for the remainder of my period under his jurisdiction he continued to attempt.

I was more than surprised at the uprisings of independence and venturesomeness that were appearing from time to time in my conduct. Though they appeared in occurrences of little magnitude, they were important in their insignificance. So far there was no serious irregularity charged against my name nor was there question about my being a religious "of strict observance." I was one of the very few who attended the early morning prayer in the college chapel, as I was one of the very few who kept up the practice of external mortification. Yet there was certainly some subtle change taking place in me and I little dreamed at the time what its nature was or whither it was leading me.

At length I fell into a more serious fault which strangely enough was the outcome of that generous virtue, love of country, the effects of which had puzzled me at Clongowes. It happened that while I was at Milltown Park the Irish rebellion of "Easter Week" (1916) broke out. My brother was away in France at the time, working as an army surgeon with the British forces, and my mother was quite alone at home. When the street fighting in Dublin became dangerous for non-combatants, I obtained permission to go to my mother and to bring her to a safe part of the suburbs where she might live until the trouble

was over. My mother was not in the least frightened and was only concerned about the unevenness of the fight and the cruelty, as she termed it, of the British in employing big guns against "the poor Irish lads who had only rifles and revolvers." She was extraordinarily patriotic and was ready to do anything in her power to help on "The Rebels."

The aftermath of the rebellion was more serious than the rebellion itself. An intensive revolutionary propaganda, brilliantly conceived and efficiently organized, was set afoot to inflame the whole nation against England. Leaflets, pamphlets and songs were circulated, stories were whispered, news of varying degrees of accuracy was distributed, and the people were stirred profoundly. Everything said and done was retailed to me at Milltown Park by my mother, and I became a centre of information about "The Rebellion." After a time republican leaders came out into the open (such of them as were not in prison) and held meetings. The first great meeting was convened by Count Plunkett. It was to be held at the Mansion House, Dublin. My mother, a friend of Count Plunkett, was to be there and I was invited. Another Jesuit also was invited, but both he and I were forbidden by Father Power to go to the meeting.

We accepted his decision obediently and resolved to content ourselves with standing in the crowd outside the Mansion House to watch the delegates enter.

While we stood there we were recognized by a brilliant young Irish republican, Rory O'Connor, who urged us to come to the meeting. We told him we could not take part in the meeting but asked him if there was a gallery from which we might see the meeting and hear what was being said, without being actually part of the meeting. He went to enquire and presently returned with two tickets. He had made arrangements, he said, for us to have seats just within the door, adding that there was no gallery. We consulted, *rationalized*, and entered!

A few days later my fellow Jesuit and I were sent for by Father Power. His face was black as thunder and he told us that our disobedience was of the gravest kind. He had found out where we had been and had already reported the matter to the provincial, the highest Jesuit authority in Ireland. He expected, he said, that our ordinations would be postponed (the severest punishment within the Order), and that other penalties would be inflicted upon us as well. He regarded me as the moving spirit in the crime and I expected no mercy, even though it was my first serious fault since I had entered the Jesuit Order thirteen years before.

Circumstances happily intervened in our favour. There was a great shortage of priests in both England and Ireland owing to the number of chaplains at the front. It would have made things worse for our

province had our ordinations been postponed. Save for chastisement of the tongue, and injured reputations, we escaped scatheless, but we felt dishonoured by the whole affair. We had done wrong, and we had been spied upon, and no good whatsoever had come of it.

Meanwhile three years had rolled by, and the great day of ordination was approaching. With the impetuosity that characterizes the child-mind of the monk I suddenly plunged whole-heartedly into preparation for my priesthood. As if by magic, all the fervour of my noviceship returned. With a mild ecstasy of devotion I began to practice saying mass, and learning the technique of confessing and baptizing and giving benediction. The rather puzzling rubrics with regard to the "office" were quickly learned and the final examinations in theology faced with holy confidence. My pre-ordination retreat of eight days was one long contemplation on the inestimable gift of the priesthood. My heart was bubbling over with happiness and my one anxiety was lest I should die before having the privilege of offering the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

On a bright morning in June, 1917, I said my first mass in the sweet, devotional chapel of the Children's Hospital (Temple Street), Dublin. A few paces behind me, as I stood at the altar, knelt my mother and my brothers, both of whom were now living in Dub-

lin. Behind them knelt nephews, cousins and friends, together with several Sisters of Charity, all eager to be present at a first mass and to receive the blessing of a "new priest." The chapel opened on a garden of trees and flowers, with a fountain in the centre where little cripples played or sat watching the silvery splashes, while they forgot their pains. It was a noiseless, green nook in a region of grimy tenements where the starved city sparrows rested amid the refreshing scent of lilac and may.

One of my old masters, Father George Roche, was at my side assisting me. He was a Jesuit who represented all that was best in the training of my Alma Mater. Besides being a true and devout gentleman, he was one of the finest cricketers Clongowes had produced. He was very dear to my brothers and my mother, and he carried in his person associations with many happy memories. My two eldest nephews, Rupert and Stan, their young faces aglow with excitement over the great privilege that was theirs, made the responses and served.

I was not nervous but I was tense with the sense of the marvellous mystery at which I was to officiate. On the snow-white altar cloth before me lay a chalice of wine and on a paten a wafer of unleavened bread. Presently *at my words,* at my repetition of the eternal formula of consecration, the wine would become the blood of Christ, and the bread the body of Christ.

My hands, soiled and sinful though they were, would be privileged to raise aloft in adoration the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. My hands would carry to the altar rails, and place upon my mother's lips the sacred host, giving to her, who gave me life, her eternal God. The blood of Christ I myself should consume together with the large wafer now changed into His Body. Surely the words "*Sanctus! Sanctus! Sanctus!*" were none too sacred to pronounce in presence of this mystery of mysteries. What a flood of emotion uplifted me as I bent and kissed the altar! How sweet seemed the words of the Gospel that I read; how meaningful the beautiful prayers of the Church!

Never shall I forget the enchantment, the exaltation and the grace that were mine as I drank the consecrated wine. No experience I ever had had was so rich, so real, so consoling! The enduring presence of that moment made my prayer of prayers the repetition of the words: "Blood of Christ . . . Blood of Christ." I was in Christ and Christ was in me. It was a union that was at once mystical and substantial. My contact with Christ was a wonderful, beautiful plunge into a sea of *love* and loveliness. Never could I hope to enjoy so sublime an experience again.

My first mass was an ecstasy of joy. For it I had waited all the years. In it my faith was fulfilled and justified. The realization surpassed all my ex-

pectations. Trust in God's pity and sweetness overcame the misgivings that my sense of unworthiness prompted. I gave myself confidently and wholeheartedly to God and I felt that He gave Himself to me. I prayed that this intimate union might endure forever and that those I loved so dearly might be richly blessed. I knew that my mother's eyes were full of tears, and that my brothers were deeply moved, at this great consummation of my life. When the moment for bestowing my blessing came, the prayer of Mother Church welled up from the depths of my soul: "*Benedictio Dei Omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti! Amen!*" When mass was over I knelt at my *prie-Dieu* in the sacristy forgetful of everything, spellbound with wonder, thanking God for all His goodness to me.

After thanksgiving I came again among my own who were waiting outside to offer their congratulations and to kneel and kiss my consecrated hands. Once more I had to bless all, this time one by one. My first individual blessing was for my mother to whom I owed so much. Then I blessed my brothers, my nephews, and my friends. There followed an *agape*, a feast of love, in the convent parlour where the loveliest flowers adorned the breakfast table. After breakfast the family were photographed together; mother sitting at my right with her hands in mine; my brothers, nephews, and sister-in-law mak-

ing up the group. A copy of this photograph lies beside me as I write. It is only twelve years old, but the centre figure, mine, namely, is fading out, and my mother seems to be feeling for the hand of the phantom-form of her lost priest-son.

It is impossible for any but priests themselves to realize the sense of power that ordination confers. The young priest feels himself possessed of divine force and inspiration to work "*in nomine Domini.*" In the confessional he forgives sins, pours balm over troubled minds, solves doubts and difficulties; at the altar rail he places the sacred host on the tongues of communicants, joyfully consummating their union with Christ; he lays hands upon the sick, heartens the dying, composes quarrels, and preaches with fervour and rapture. He is full of zeal, and full of divine power, and his only yearning is for more and more work to do for the Master.

Entranced with my priesthood I sought out every occasion for doing good. I was appointed, almost immediately, to the chaplaincy of a hospital where incurable patients, mostly cancerous and tubercular, were confined. I listened with patience to complaints and repinings, and whispered words of comfort. Every day for hours I sat at bedsides of the dying. Often I had to struggle hard to stifle the retching at the fearful odours of corrupting bodies. Often I had to watch in an agony of pity hemorrhages that

presaged approaching death. My only thought was to comfort and strengthen the poor sufferers by spiritual ministrations. I was at the beck and call of every patient in the hospital and rejoiced to have my assistance invoked. I was enchanted with the mysticism of the priesthood, with the privilege of representing in person the mercy and gentleness of Christ.

My willingness to do priestly work resulted in my having within the comparatively short period of a few years a considerable experience. I gave many retreats to nuns and religious brothers and Children of Mary. I heard confessions of rich and poor, young and old, soldiers, sailors, priests, and prostitutes. I learned the Irish language so as to be able to minister to the needs of the primitive islanders on the Aran Isles. When in London I had charge for two years of a sodality of Catholic actresses, and took part in open-air Evidence Guild work in the public parks. I had many penitents among the members of my own Order, the Jesuits, and many among members of other religious orders. I gave a month's mission in a large town called Newry, and preached from many pulpits. I had private and public debates on points of doctrine with "heretics," and was often sent as emissary to convert hardened sinners. I had to baptize babies and adults, to anoint the dying, and to hear confessions in places as strange as railway compartments, and lonely crossroads. To use a

Pauline expression I was "eaten up" with zeal, and never in all my priesthood (which lasted seven years) did I fail to fulfil the duty conscience pointed out to me, whether it was insisting on the severe marriage laws of the Church, or bidding an unhappy nun leave her convent, or confirming by my approval a vocation that meant the breaking of hearts, or counselling a tubercular mother to die rather than practice birth control. And all the time I was so strong in my faith and so enamoured thereof that in any criticism of the Church, however well founded, I saw only disloyalty, malevolence and blasphemy.

My early experiences in the ministry made a deep impression upon me. Some of them chilled and shocked me; others heartened me. I tried in vain to bring back to the faith a cousin of my own, a retired doctor of the Indian army who had studied Buddhism in the East and found peace in it. He was a well-read man, who had seen much of life, and whose scepticism was founded in disillusionment. He was dry and unimpressionable. I spoke of Christ, and set up my proof of His divinity founded in the historical fact of the resurrection. He listened patiently and attentively, and in a quiet way expressed his doubts about the credibility of the gospel. I saw it was impossible to win him over and I felt disappointed. In this and other cases I found it useless to argue with sceptics.

It seemed to me tragic that there should be no means of *proving the truth of the faith* in such a way as to convince honest men who required a strictly scientific proof. It seemed terrible to me that my fellow labourers in the vineyard should be as preoccupied as I found them to be about stipends, and gifts and monetary recompenses for their work. I had no conception, before I began my work as a priest, to what extent the economic law entered into the administration of religion. I was shocked profoundly by much that I saw and heard. I was shocked in particular by the cynical manner in which brother priests confessed their sins. This cynicism contrasted unfavourably, in my eyes, with the deep sorrow and remorse that characterized many lay penitents. I recognized, of course, that priests by the very fact of confessing their sins, displayed faith in the sacrament of absolution, but the light manner in which they enumerated them showed that they had a very low ideal of their priestly state. They would shake hands and laugh after confession as though they had just completed a successful deal.

I found such admixture of the purely "natural" in confession that my mind was disturbed. There was so much ignorant superstition in the way in which sins were confessed. Nervous men, obviously driven by sheer fear of hell, would "to make sure" go to ridiculous extremes in recounting their sins. In-

capable of judging or reasoning, in the presence of fear they would pour forth a torrential stream of self-accusations. On the other hand, many women would draw out their empty confessions obviously for the sole purpose of having a quiet tête-à-tête with a man. Some superstitious souls would relate incredible experiences, others bereft of faith would confess their crimes, solely for the comfort to be gained by exteriorizing their mind wounds. But, on the other hand, there were many who made really edifying confessions, full of faith in the supernatural grace that was won thereby. With honest purpose of amendment they told their sins, and with sincerity they expressed their sorrow for having committed them.

Though interested in my work as a confessor, I never felt *curious* as to who the penitents were who confessed such and such sins, or as to the details of the sins themselves. I was amply satisfied with the very minimum of information needed with a view to absolution, and my sole preoccupation was to put the sinner right with God and send him or her away happy and strengthened.

As there were disappointments in the ministry, so also there were consolations. My first experience of laying on of hands had a most happy result. A father and mother brought me their little daughter who was suffering frightfully from her teeth. She

had been to a dentist and had come away with her pain increased. "Would I bless her," they asked, "and perhaps cure her?" I raised my eyes to heaven, prayed, and then placed my hands on the girl's head. Next moment she looked up smiling to her mother. "Mamma," she cried, "my pain is quite gone!"

Once I was asked by some pious ladies to call on "a very wicked man" who had for years neglected the sacraments and who was living in luxury and sin. I called to see him at his hotel. He received me very coldly, and asked me to what he might attribute the favour of my visit. I tried to explain. He said he felt no ill-will towards me but that he considered it a great impertinence of his friends to have suggested the mission I had undertaken. I departed crestfallen.

His friends continued to pray harder than ever for him. A few days later he phoned me and begged me to come and see him. When I arrived he was most apologetic and docile and begged me to hear his confession. He put himself entirely in my hands and set about reforming his life at once. I had successes of this kind, intermingled with failures, and I came to realize that there were many ups and downs in the path of an apostle.

Once when I was giving a retreat in a convent a nun came to me and told me a sad story. She was very unhappy, and her health was suffering. She

was afraid she was going out of her mind. She had not really wished to become a nun but had been urged to enter in a precipitate manner. "Who urged you?" I asked. "I called," she said, "to see a certain famous Jesuit in London, to get spiritual advice. He did not know anything about me, but before I was five minutes with him he suddenly declared in a very emphatic voice: 'Christ reveals to me that you must at once enter such and such a convent [mentioning it] or your soul will be lost!' I was terribly disturbed as I really did not want to be a nun, but I was afraid not to follow his advice." After chatting with her a few times, and making sure that she was not suffering from self-deception, I advised her to leave just as quickly as she had entered. I felt confident that I, too, was "inspired" in giving this advice. I thought of nuns as heroic and generous, and very holy, but I realized at the same time that every woman was not fitted for the life. Other priests would have been more cautious than I was in giving such radical counsel, but I believed in doing a thing strongly and at once if it had to be done, and I had such confidence in my own judgment as every young priest has.

While still a young priest my courage was put to a severe test. At the time I was spending a summer vacation with a Jesuit community, at Tramore, in Southern Ireland, where there is a dangerous beach. Late one afternoon I was walking along this beach

alone, listening, as I was never tired of doing, to the challenging music of the breaking waves. Suddenly I heard an old couple calling for help.

I hastened to them and they pointed out to sea saying that a man had just disappeared. They showed me where his clothes lay, and told me he was a tall man. They begged me to save him. I knew it would be an almost impossible task for me to bring in a man if he struggled at all, or if there was a current running against me, but all the same I plunged in and swam in the direction the old couple had indicated. I was not afraid, but a kind of despair filled my soul. An ugly hope that I should be unable to locate him appeared in my mind, but I repressed it contemptuously and swam about in every direction as swiftly as I could, searching for the man.

When almost exhausted I heard cries from the beach. Folk were calling me back and pointing to an object that was drifting in. I returned and pulled in the body. There followed a protracted struggle to revive him. A few times, as I worked on him, he seemed on the point of coming to and, mindful of my priestly power, I gave him "conditional absolution," but he never revived. A doctor at length arrived and pronounced him dead. By this time I was sick and shivering and my bathing suit was in rags. When I recovered my clothes I found that I had been

robbed of the few shillings which had been given me as "vacation money."

The sequel of this little incident was strange. A ridiculously exaggerated account of the "attempted rescue" was published in the leading Irish papers. My superiors in Dublin read about it, and for the first time in my religious life I was the recipient of an invitation to dine at "headquarters," at Gardiner Street, in Dublin. On account of the publicity I had received I was deemed worthy to sit at table with the leading Jesuits of my province. I caused them a little surprise by declining the invitation. Had I been an opportunist Jesuit I should have accepted, and perhaps have curried favour with them, but I was content to lead my life as a priest, as far as I could, in my own way, and I wanted to be left alone. Besides, my ordination had given me back something of the sense of dignity and self-respect that had been mine before I had been subjected to the treadmill training of the Order and I recoiled from the humiliation of reciting before the assembled fathers at Gardiner Street a journalistic account of the "attempted rescue."

CHAPTER VIII

A SCHOOL OF PERFECTION

THE idea of a School of Perfection is peculiar to the Jesuits. Not satisfied, like other Orders, with the methodical training in virtue given in the noviciate, and subsequently reinforced by the practices of monastic life, the Jesuits subject each one of their members, a year or two after they have been ordained priests, to an additional year's intensive noviciate. They take into account the likelihood of a certain loss of fervour as a result of the teaching period in the colleges, and the new experience of a freer life during early priesthood, and so they set up a mode of rehabilitation in piety and fervour, which is called the Tertianship, or the *Scola Perfectionis*. This school begins with a thirty days' retreat, and continues thereafter for about nine months.

My tertianship began on September 7, 1919, in the old home of noviceship days, Tullabeg. I had just completed my fifteenth year in the Jesuit Order, and my second year of the priesthood. I felt a little

afraid of the ordeal before me, but at the same time I realized that I needed a spiritual rejuvenation. My faith was strong as ever, and my zeal was undiminished, but at the same time I had grown slack in many ways. I had begun to criticize superiors, and the government of the Society. I often failed to devote to prayer the time allotted to it. I availed myself of small money presents as a source of supplies of tobacco and such comforts, and I frequented "movie shows," ate "outside the house" and visited family friends, without permission. Whereas I had done nothing very wrong, I had grown somewhat indifferent to the dictate of perfection which insisted on constant mortification, obedience and humility, and had slipped into minor forms of pride and good-living. I was clearly conscious of having lost some ground in my spiritual life, and recognized the need of pulling myself up sharply through the agency of the school of perfection.

At the same time I could not shut my eyes to the fact that the ten months would be a hard and wearisome period, and to some extent a waste of time for it would take me away from all participation in apostolic work. Again Tullabeg was the same cold, forbidding-looking place it had been of yore. However beautiful the spiritual life it sheltered, it presented a slightly terrifying aspect to the natural eye. The grey walls seemed even bleaker than they had

seemed fifteen years before. The same bitter winds blew across the bare frontage; the straight gravelled walks, and desolate sand pits, the lines of young pine trees that were too immature to add any beauty to the landscape, all chilled me. A feeling of gloom and isolation came over me on entering, and were it not that I had twenty English and Irish companion priests, who, as was evident, had the same feelings as I had about Tullabeg, I should have been profoundly depressed. I knew all this was not right, that I should be full of joy on entering "the house of the Lord," but feelings have their way in asserting themselves in spite of the reproofs of reason.

We, Tertians, were to become novices again, subject to the old minute and trying rules under which we had lived in our first days in the Order. We were to keep silence constantly, to observe bounds strictly, to read no papers, to discuss no politics, to write no letters, and to sweep and dust and clean corridors, although our hands were now consecrated by the ordination chrism. Our novice master, or "Tertian Master" as he was called, was to be our one and only guide, leading us up to greater heights of perfection than we had ever known before. He was to encourage us to carry on a ruthless war against self, and to help us cut with spiritual surgery all bonds that tied us to the world.

Father Gartland was our master. He was an

English Jesuit, well over sixty years of age, who had held very high offices in the Society. He was a frail but kindly old man, very charming and spiritual in manner, a fine and courteous gentleman. He had the gay, chatty manner, that characterizes the English cleric, but at the same time he had that tactful and gentle sympathy which is peculiarly Irish, and which he owed to the Celtic strain in his blood. Everyone liked and respected "the old man," and it was little short of a tragedy that his strength was so easily exhausted, and that with the collapse of his strength, his mental acumen at once failed. Then we, listening to his polished words, were faced by the rather piteous spectacle of a brain, helpless through lack of blood, stringing together light and foolish things; the while the noble self behind the brain was visibly ashamed of the fiasco. But, luckily, Father Gartland's strength held out for a few months and he was able to give us an effective and very spiritual "Long Retreat."

Rather frightened though I was at the prospect of the ten months of intensive spiritual culture that lay before me, there were several, especially among our brethren from across the channel, who were much more frightened. Some few of them were appalled at the ordeal. More outspoken than Irish Jesuits, they gave free expression to their feelings. "God!" said one of them to me, the night we arrived, "we'll

all go crazy in this hole." "Cheer up, we'll soon be dead," responded a cynical Irish father. "Where in hell will I get my afternoon tea?" interjected another Englishman. "I hear there is nothing but bogland for miles about this blasted place." Some of them, ex-army chaplains, had brought with them stores of tobacco and novels, wherewith to while away idle hours; only one or at most two of the twenty showed any sign of gladness at this return to the garden of the soul.

After a few days we settled down. The community-sense was awakened and we brushed, and dusted, and swept chapels and floors, with a kind of amused good will, recognizing that "the whole bunch" were in the same predicament. We thought it best to get shipshape before the Long Retreat began, lest we should find its thirty days of absolute silence and constant prayer too hard to bear. We groaned, of course, and grumbled, but insensibly we began to line up. Then at last the retreat started and each of us found himself seized with that extraordinary pious frenzy that the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius inevitable engender. The gloomy, disgruntled men who a few days previously had been cursing their lot, were now alert, earnest, joyful and prayerful. The change was dramatic. The tertianship vibrated in spiritual fervour. There was perfect order, silence, observance of rule. The English

fathers, who had been talking in disgusted tones about "this hell of a place" and their craving to see "soccer-finals," might now be found kneeling motionless for hours in the chapel absorbed in contemplation. Ex-army chaplains, who had learned how to amuse themselves and relax during their days of leave from the front, and who had fallen in with the soldiers' way of jeering at trifles, were now docile, self-denying novices, faithfully practising the simplest exercises of piety and devotion.

A yellow-leaved, torn notebook remains in my hands in which I jotted down thoughts ("Lights") that struck me during meditations made in the course of this thirty days' retreat. The first morning, under the influence of my quickly reawakening fervour, I wrote down: "Cursed be he who doth the work of the Lord carelessly, or unfaithfully. Let me seek the right dispositions. *Paratum cor meum.* (My heart is prepared.) Can I say it yet? Looking back I see how often I was unprepared for the work I undertook. Is the wax soft for the impression? Be zealous and do penance! Listen for the knocking! 'Each one shall bear his own burden.'" A few days later, as my notes show, I was bewailing the fact that in the past: "I had not consulted God nor sought to do His Will. In the past I had served my own will, not God's. I made my own will the rule of life . . . all my wrongdoing came from my ignor-

ing my dependence upon God." Then as a result of meditating on the manner in which the Blessed Virgin submitted her will to God, I received a "light" or insight and wrote: "I saw the beauty of *her* sense of dependence on God."

The thirty days' retreat wore on. Each day there were four lectures from the master followed by four meditations made in private. Besides, each priest said his morning mass, and read his Office. An atmosphere of sweet peace and holy joy pervaded the house. There was no longer any trace of gloom, nor was sadness felt save only that which swept through one's soul at the memory of one's past offences against God. Each of us yielded to the impulse of grace and followed the guidance of the divine light vouchsafed us. The ecstasy of spiritual gladness and love that I had known when fifteen years before I had first inhaled the perfume of high heavenly things returned. Once more I felt myself attached irrevocably to the whole-hearted service of Christ.

In bitter, and I think exaggerated, self-condemnation, I wrote in my notes. "My point of view in the past has been that of the world: to have my own way; success, pleasure, honour. That *is not* the point of view laid down in the *Fundamentum* (the leading principle of the Spiritual Exercises). The great, eternal, all-powerful will of God—alone, above all,

always, in all things. I belong to *it wholly*. Let me allow no creature to draw me away from that will. I am nothing—life is very short—the mighty of the world fall—all is vanity save doing God's will. Dreadful is judgment for one who has followed his own will. Dear Christ, give me understanding! Make the seed of this truth to grow in my soul! O! Mary! Teach me to say: 'Behold the servant of the Lord! Be it done to me according to thy will!' "

I meditated on hell, but without being much moved, without having, as my notes complain, "much vividness." "I didn't get, God help me," say my notes, "an intimate sense of the pains of the damned." Yet one light, a strange one was mine. I was impressed by a curious fancy. "If I am damned I'll hear one howl of joy—from the devil—that evil monster I listen to every day."

The idea of the devil "howling for joy" over my misfortune, caught my imagination. It stirred me and brought home to me the terrible predicament of the damned. The simplicity of the fancy in no way weakened its driving force. I was determined to rob the devil of that sinister pleasure he was, perchance, promising himself. There follows in my notes another item of my meditation, an item that reveals pretty clearly the slightly abnormal state of mind that I had reached as a result of intensive prayer. "There are priests in hell—young Irish

priests—who were once good and loved Holy Mass and prayer and were kind. *Nobody may justly have pity for them now.* They are justly and rightly damned."

Here was I, a young Irish priest myself, humane by temperament, ready to work for the lessening of suffering, ready to sacrifice myself for the happiness of others, calmly contemplating in my mind the spectacle of brother priests of my own age and race condemned to never-ending cruel torture, and justifying myself in refusing them any pity! "They are justly and rightly damned!"

Each morning, during the retreat, we arose at 5.20 however tired we felt, or however light and disturbed our slumbers had been. Each night before we retired we lashed ourselves with *disciplines* (scourges). Seldom we ate more than a bare sufficiency to keep up our strength for the day's prayer. Never did we enjoy, during the thirty days, a half-hour of relaxation. The strain and tension were unremitted. Some of us began to look haggard. We stumbled upstairs, and broke out occasionally into silly giggling. We cut ourselves shaving, and jumped at the banging of doors. We caught ourselves speaking aloud or pacing our rooms with perfectly blank minds. But in spite of nervous strain we kept at it hard, and kept at it till the last bell of the retreat had rung.

In the course of the retreat my mind was sometimes clouded by a fear, which in turn would yield place to a hope. The fear was lest I should ever cause scandal of any kind and rob Christ of His lambs and sheep. The hope was that I should die before I ever again offended God. "Rather let me die than ever mortally sin again," was my constant prayer. In my meditation on death, as my notes reveal, "I prayed for submission to the oncoming, unknown trial" (death). And, "I put my death under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary and accepted it (in anticipation) from the Eternal Father as a punishment. *It* will come soon—and all this generation will soon be gone off the face of the earth—all of them. Here in retreat," I added, "one is cut off from the world and so detached from all worldly things that it would be easy to die."

Sometimes I questioned my inmost soul searchingly. I wanted to make sure, doubly sure, that I was *in earnest.* I had been subjected to so much supervision, so much watching, so much suspicion by narrow-minded men in authority, that my confidence in myself was somewhat shaken. As a child I knew I was good, earnest, well-intentioned and so forth, but later, having been so often cross-questioned and examined and misunderstood, I had lost the simple spontaneous faith in myself that had been such a comfort to me. "Am I in earnest?" I asked

myself in my notes. "Am I really changed or changing? In the past I made good starts but fell away—not in earnest! Am I now? How can I be in earnest? Pray and think! This is fundamental. Hurry, penances, consolations, rushing piety even for three or four years means not so much! Was I ever in earnest? In my apparent goodness as a boy? As a young Jesuit? Was I? Am I? Will I be in earnest?"

That question was a cry of despair from the deepest recess of my heart. It meant that I craved piteously to be trusted. It revealed the profound hurt my soul had suffered. Superiors had implanted in me through their lack of approbation for my honest efforts, a torturing doubt of myself. As a child I had loved and appreciated simple sincerity, and kindly encouragement. I had developed a need of it. In religion I had not been given this straightforward treatment, but instead something that was artificial and calculated. It is tragic to be in doubt of one's own sincerity and earnestness, it is worse almost than to be in doubt of one's existence. I feel today that my training as a Jesuit, whatever good it did me, unfortunately undermined the most precious possession of my personality, its self-trust, its self-conscious honesty. Even in the intensely spiritual state in which my heart was at the time of the meditation referred to above, I was nevertheless conscious that it had suf-

fered a wrong. It forgave. It took most of the blame on itself. But it recognized at the same time the reality of the wound in its side.

During the retreat I found awakening an old habit of mine. I selected paths in the least frequented parts of the grounds, usually at the extreme limits of "bounds" and made my meditations walking up and down these paths. There should be trees near by, if possible pine trees, for I loved the resinous aroma, and the sound of the wind in the branches. The path itself should be mossy or a track through a meadow, and while I walked I missed no one of the simple charms of nature. I had acquired the mystical faculty of sensing God in flowers, birds and clouds, and felt myself all the closer to God when alone. It mattered little to me whether the weather was fine or rainy or murky; so long as I could be alone with nature I was happy.

Before retiring to rest at night I would make my way to the pretty little graveyard where lay buried some Jesuits I had known. With only the starlight to guide me as I walked among the yew trees that stood over the graves, I meditated on the vanity of life. I thought affectionately of my departed brethren—of all save of him who had refused me his blessing that night, twelve years previously, when I was about to set out from Tullabeg to Louvain. He too lay at rest, but there seemed to be a barrier between

him and me. Though I had once thought him hard and sinister, he had belied my reading of his character in his death. The illness that proved fatal to him was caught as he stood bareheaded in the rain, at the burial of a poor lay-brother. He himself was ill at the time, but his loyalty to the custom of attending the burial of members of his community had made him risk his life to be present. That was the last occasion on which that strange, able, autocratic ex-provincial, Father James Murphy, acted in an official capacity. He died a martyr to respect for Jesuit traditions. I felt no sorrow at his graveside, nor prayed for his departed spirit. There remained, in spite of myself, the feeling that he had wronged me deeply. I knew if he were alive he would still distrust me, and would still be unable to give me an intelligible explanation of his distrust. He would have found me once again as obedient and docile as I had been in my noviceship days under his authority, but he would have suspected that my docility was untrue.

The retreat had reawakened all the ardour of my personal love for Christ. The appealing chime in "the call of Christ" touched me as profoundly as ever it had done. "Dear Lord, help me to understand *your call*: what it means and how to value it," record my notes. "Dear Lord, give me strength to answer your call! Dear Mother Mary, help me to see wherein heretofore I failed, and why I failed, and help me

to succeed this time! Dear Lord! Give me a real desire to suffer with you; to have sorrow, affliction, and confusion for my sins! That I may know and love you!"

Later I wrote in pencil a veritable lyric of love. "Dear Lord, help me to put my happiness and joy in doing your will! Then I will always have You. You will not go away from me nor will I lose your love. And since my religious rule, which is your will for me, imposes on me the close imitation of you in poverty, chastity, and obedience, help me to become like you and to put my happiness in imitating you."

As the retreat drew to a close, and as preoccupation about the future grew, I planned with great care a series of resolutions which covered the correction of my faults and the development of the virtues that I needed most. I was utterly and whole-heartedly bent on being a saint. I faced the cost, and in the most practical and cold-blooded manner, mapped out my campaign. I offered myself body and soul to God and made a full and complete holocaust of all things that could detach me from His service. Nude, adoring, beseeching I lay before my Heavenly King and pleaded for perseverance in doing His Will. All that was naturally and supernaturally possible for me to do, I did. I kept nothing back from God: made no conditions; but offered myself without any reserve. Then in a spiritual sunburst of divine gladness the

long retreat of my tertianship came to an end. Singing with my companions "*Te Deum Laudamus*" ("We praise Thee, O God!") I felt my heart and soul ascend to greater heights than they had ever reached before. The mighty work of regeneration of spirit was accomplished. My conscience was strong and fresh and pure. Life stretched before me as a race to be run for God, as a battle to be fought—as a crown to be won!

Coming back to the humdrum of ordinary life after a spiritual retreat is an experience that never loses its strangeness. Everything seems new and different. The voice sounds strange, the lips even are stiff and as it were reluctant to form words. One feels a gentle sadness at having to descend to mundane things. Even innocent ocupations appear to be profane and unholy. The question "How did you like the retreat?" seems as tactless, almost as offensive as if one were asked "How did you like your mother?" One is timid and fearful lest one slip into a fault and lose the grace that has been won at such cost, and the value of which now looms so large. Of course, at the same time, one feels relief at the diminution of the strain and tension, and at the prospect of a little rest. But it is sad to realize, as one has to do when contacts with actuality reopen, that the intoxication of a retreat must perforce pass quickly, and that "earth and heaven" are æons apart. The evening of the day that saw my re-entry

into the commonplace world of community life I felt wearied and puzzled by the emotions I had passed through. However, kneeling in prayer, I renewed all my resolutions, and implored God to increase my fervour, rather than to suffer it to diminish.

There were still eight months to spend at Tullabeg before the termination of the tertianship. The Jesuit Constitutions had to be studied and sermons had to be written. Our kindly old master, Father Gartland, began to fail, and his commentaries on the Constitutions were feeble. There was, as a result, little to do and time began to weigh heavily on our hands. Though we, Jesuit tertians, found ourselves in the most edifying of religious houses, and though we had but recently made with surpassing zeal a thirty days' retreat, we began to yield a little ground . . . some of our more exalted resolutions were forgotten . . . and minor faults began to reappear. This descent was not sudden. It was slow, and gradual, but alas! inevitable. Before six weeks were passed there were unmistakable allusions to the *tædium vitæ*, and to the flesh-pots that awaited us when the tertianship was over. The descent did not go far, but it went far enough to allow us without remorse or shame to look for newspapers to read, and to seek comfort from one another by surreptitious chats in each other's rooms. A few even went so far as to visit country pastors, when out walking, in the hope of being invited to

smoke and partake of "light refreshment." They were but small faults that we were guilty of, but they were faults that savagely menaced our resolutions to live as saints.

The temptation to which I succumbed, and which reawakened in me interests that conflicted with my ideal of detachment, was that of visiting a Jesuit father who was bound up with the Irish Republican movement. He was a personal adviser of Eamon De Valera and perfectly informed as to all the developments of the campaign for Irish freedom. He was a holy man, mortified, generous, and patient, but his heart was set on seeing his country free and prosperous. An hour's chat with him, even though enjoyed with the permission of my superior, kindled such disturbing thoughts in my mind that my prayers became crowded with distractions. The old question arose again. "Why could not a religious love his country and at the same time be a perfect religious?" I failed to see wherein lay the subtle danger to my spiritual peace. The cause of Irish freedom seemed to me a good and holy cause. Would not a strong and prosperous Catholic Ireland be a great asset to the Church and to the cause of God? Would I not be doing God's work by helping on, as well as I could, the movement that was directed towards such a noble end?

Father James Tomkin, the patriotic Jesuit whom I

visited, told me that he heard the confessions of the Volunteers, in glens and copses and on the roadsides, and that they parted from him with faces aglow at the prospect of dying in battle for their country. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.* Why was it not admittedly a "sweet and seemly thing" for Irish boys to shed their blood for Ireland, when it was considered so for Englishmen, Italians and Frenchmen? Poor Father Tomkin often broke down and wept when he recounted the cruel misrepresentations that he and his beloved Volunteers were suffering at the hands of those who should know better.

Perhaps it was owing to this fatal, indirect contact with the luckless love of Roisin Dhu, that my last great final effort to become a saint failed. For fail it did. I left Tullabeg, when my ten months of tertianship were over, certainly with not less faith and zeal than I had had on entering it, but with less hope than ever of becoming a completely docile, detached and observant religious. No reaction against the mentality of my Order had as yet possessed me. I still loved my Order and was proud of my membership of it, but there was growing within me, unperceived by me as yet, a yearning for a larger, fuller life than that which was admissible within the scope of the Jesuit Constitutions.

CHAPTER IX

LONDON

THE Jesuit Constitutions contain a very enlightened provision whereby certain of the younger fathers, after their tertianship, are set apart for a period of two years—*a biennium*—for special studies. I was lucky enough to qualify for this assignment and was sent to London University to follow courses in biology and psychology. It was the first, and alas! the only occasion on which I was the recipient of a corporate act of confidence from the Society, but this particular act of confidence meant, at the time, more to me than anything else in the world. It gave me a much longed-for opportunity of imbibing modern science at a fountain-head, and of finding out for myself the worth of the new psychology that was already attracting the attention of the learned world.

It was my good fortune also to be allowed to live for the greater part of my *biennium* in a strange old-fashioned house which had been donated to the Society by Lady Gibbs, the wife of Sir Philip Gibbs,

for the purpose of establishing a Catholic Boys' Club in North London. Sir Philip and Lady Gibbs lived next door, and were frequent visitors to the club. Often they entertained at their own home and I had the opportunity there of making the acquaintance of H. G. Wells, and of other men well known in the literary world.

My superior and sole Jesuit companion was a charming young Englishman, Father Frank Devas. He was the son of a well-known writer on political economy, and had two brothers priests, one a Franciscan and the other a Dominican. He was a poet by nature—dreamy, erratic, discursive. He was also a fine orator and was in constant demand as a preacher. In his absence I was left in charge of the house, and directed the activities of the club to some little extent.

Father Devas and I soon become fast friends. He loved dogs, children and flowers, but seemed to have a bigoted abhorrence of womankind. He was quite original in his outlook on religion and held that the true Catholic spirit was a mixture of ritual and honest freethinking. He loved to discuss the most bizarre subjects, from sexual perversion to the eternal destiny of animals . . . and he had the rare quality of being utterly honest in argument and of admitting the conclusions which logically resulted from his premises. When, as frequently happened, he reached conclu-

sions which were diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Church he would laugh and say: "Well, either the Church should change all that, or I should be burned as a heretic!"

The freshness of his spirit charmed me and encouraged me to think for myself, especially in matters of psychology in which we were both much interested. He was always delighted to hear about abnormalities and was exuberant if I could point out to him some characteristic act of his own, such as sucking his pipestem, which according to the symptomology of Freudians had sex significance. He was in no way shy about illustrating from the rich harvest of his own experience such abnormalities as we discussed.

My course of special study brought me in contact with some of the most celebrated scientists of England—Starling, Elliot Smith, Bayliss, Hill and Spearman. My laboratory work on the nervous system of the earthworm was done under the direction of Watson, a learned professor of zoology. One of my series of slides attracted the notice of Elliot Smith, who subsequently invited me to his own laboratory. I found it delightful to work with men who were at once courteous and capable, and it was not long before I shed an old prejudice that I had been taught, namely, that the modern man of science aims before all at undermining the teaching of the Church. To undermine the teaching of the Church had, as far as

I could see, no part whatsoever in the preoccupations of my professors. They were solely engaged in the pursuit of knowledge.

"Gower Street" (University College) where my lectures were given was in Bloomsbury, an old and interesting section of London. It lay close to Euston Station; to Charing Cross Road, famous for its bookshops; and to Soho, celebrated for its pretty foreign restaurants. The building itself, save for the new Slade School, was rather dilapidated in those days, but the equipment was thoroughly up-to-date. The students were for the most part from the middle classes and lacked the distinction of bearing that belongs to Oxford and Cambridge men. But they were hard workers and keenly enthusiastic about modern science. They were liberal and non-conformist in their thinking. Not a few of them were advanced socialists. They resented any undue interference by the authorities, and were exceedingly outspoken.

On one occasion, during the course of a debate, a speaker was excoriating the British Government for its policy of robbing Ireland. "England," the speaker said, "has robbed Ireland of two billion dollars during the last century." While he was saying this the Vice-Chancellor of the College, Sir Gregory Foster entered, and manifested open disapproval of the speaker's remark. Somewhat upset, the latter took his seat, only to be replaced by a young radical, who

turned towards Sir Gregory and complained that "the last speaker had minimized, rather than exaggerated the extent of the colossal robbery that his thieving fellow countrymen had perpetrated on defenceless Erin." At this, the irate Vice-Chancellor turned and left the hall amid the cheers of the student audience.

I found, as I had hoped, in London University a veritable fountain-head of modern science. The courses were splendidly given, and the professors were thoroughly *au courant* with every modern aspect of their subjects. Many of them were themselves pursuing original researches. Work was at high pressure. There was much reading to be done, and much experimenting in the laboratories. Everything having to do with biology and in particular with the physiology of the nervous system interested me, and as far as I could I combined such study with psychology, which I made my special pursuit. I realized that one could have only a one-sided understanding of psychology unless one delved deep into biology, and I saw clearly that the shortcomings of the old scholastic psychology were due to the scholastic ignorance of this latter science. Scholastics had tried to perfect the science of the *soul* without being fully acquainted with the *soul's* function as the dynamic of vital acts.

When a lecture was over, it was pleasant to sit among the stone pillars that overlooked the small

campus at Gower Street, and to study the animation of the students, men and women, and to feel part of the stream of young life. The artists of the Slade School were, of course, the least conventional in dress and conduct. They formed a clique and only associated with the rest when a "rag" was being staged. I found the returned ex-service men the friendliest of all. They had met many "padres" at the front, and liked to discuss things with me. Often they invited me to their clubs, and over tumblers of Burton ale, regaled me with their war-time experience. Some of them used to give me their confidence and discuss their problems with me. A few of them were religiously inclined, but most of them had shed all credal predilections.

The new experience, and the freedom that I was enjoying, stimulated rather than damped my apostolic zeal. I frequently engaged in friendly religious controversy with the freethinkers among the students, and sought to win them to the faith. My religion seemed to have more substance than ever for me: I felt I was *giving something good* when I was explaining it to others. More than once, at the request of its president, I addressed the Students Christian Union and I felt deeply in sympathy with it in the midst of so much unbelief. When on one occasion the celebrated Dean Inge came to address a meeting called by this Union, and spoke more as a sceptic than as a believer, I took

him to task. Outside the university I used to speak from the platform of the Catholic Evidence Guild in Finsbury Park and Hyde Park, explaining to the crowds Catholic doctrine. Often I was heckled but my experience of answering questions as a class lecturer came to my rescue. Once a swarthy giant strode up to my platform and shouted: "Fellows like you make fortunes by pretending to forgive sins in confessionals!" I answered him calmly by quoting Church laws that forbade priests to take money for forgiving sins. "I heard thousands of confessions," I said, "but never yet took a thripenny bit for forgiving a sin. Had I done so I should have been unfrocked."

A convent on Stamford Hill, the district in which I was living with Father Devas, set afoot a sodality for Catholic actresses. The authorities of the institution asked me to take charge of this sodality and I agreed. For nearly two years I devoted every second Sunday to this work and the sodality grew steadily. I gave talks on up-to-date subjects, and encouraged the girls to frequent the sacraments. I found how erroneous had been my old prejudice that "everyone on the stage is on the way to hell." These girls were as good and pious as any other Catholic girls I had directed spiritually. Even those amongst them who, as it happened, were engaged as exponents of Eastern dances in His Majesty's theatre, were good Catholics. A few

of my sodality were anxious to become nuns: whether they ultimately entered convents or not I do not know.

The biggest apostolic venture of my student days at London University was an unique debate arranged by the Physiological and Chemical Societies combined, between myself and a distinguished chemist, Professor F. G. Donnan, on the subject of "Vitalism." I was asked to explain and defend the Catholic doctrine; Professor Donnan was to discuss the subject from the standpoint of science. The debate attracted the whole student body, and as well all the professors. It was an immense gathering, the first of its kind in London University. Professor Starling presided and arranged that after the principal speakers, Donnan and myself, the discussion would be thrown open and finally a vote would be taken.

In anticipation of the event becoming a serious matter for the interests of the Catholic Church in England I wrote to the English provincial of the Jesuits and asked him to supply a good Jesuit scientist to second my efforts. He replied that he had none in London to help me but that he would send Father Leslie Walker S. J. from Oxford.

I had had far more experience as a public speaker than the great scientist who stood opposed to me, and furthermore I availed myself of the tactical advantage of speaking first (which Professor Starling offered me). I knew that if I could lead the debate to

my own ground I would be safe, whereas if, with my limited knowledge of modern chemistry, I should be obliged to attempt a scientific refutation of my opponent's arguments, I should be seriously handicapped.

My speech was listened to with interest. I had some amusing illustrations and quips which won the audience. I had some clear and sound philosophical reasoning as well. Great and sincere applause greeted my peroration. Then my opponent spoke. He was nonplussed at realizing the difficulty of answering philosophical arguments. His voice was weak, and he was ill at ease, whereas I had thoroughly enjoyed my talk. In spite of his immense learning he failed to come up to expectations. Then the debate opened and I found to my delight that I had splendid support from among the students. When the final vote was taken my side won, amid applause, by three to one! This I considered the best day's work I had ever done for the faith. I had shown that a Catholic priest could, before an audience of scientists, present and defend a point of Catholic philosophy and win a majority vote for it.

I was associated with another University debate, hardly less exciting, though less important from the point of view of religion. The president of the College Historical Society had asked me to formulate a motion to be debated at the chief meeting of the year, and he told me I would be free, if I so wished, to

raise the Irish question. This I resolved to do, and I drew up a motion which implied severe condemnation of the recent British misrule. The president then invited me to open the debate, but I told him I should prefer, if he would allow me to get Sir John Simon, the great Liberal statesman, to be the first speaker and that I would speak in his support.

Sir John willingly consented to come and in anticipation of hearing him speak the hall was crowded to capacity. Everyone of Irish blood, directly or indirectly connected with Gower Street, including some nuns (who were attending extension courses), was present. Sir John Simon made his usual calm and dignified address, not going too far or too fast, but moderately and judiciously condemning the conduct of his Conservative foes. The reply, from a leading student orator, was an impassioned attack upon the "rebel Irish," and a justification of the policy of coercion. The first two speeches occupied about eighty minutes, and excitement had reached fever point. No one could guess how the subsequent vote would go. So far the extreme view of separatist Irishmen had not been expounded. My turn to speak then came, and dressed as I was "in clergyman," I arose —a Roman Catholic priest, nay more, a Jesuit, a child of the most reactionary Order of the most conservative of Churches!

"I intervene, in this debate, Mr. President," I said,

"not as an Englishmen would, having in mind the discussion of the *pros* and *cons* of the so-called 'Irish question,' but as an Irishman [applause], and I am not afraid to say before so sympathetic an audience, as an *Irish Republican.*"

My daring was amply rewarded. When the last two words passed over my lips, uttered proudly and defiantly, an applause of unusual warmth greeted them. "Here," the students thought, "is real drama. Here is a rebel priest raising his voice on behalf of his country, in despite of what his own conservative bishops think and say, in despite also of the fact that he is in the midst of the enemies of his country." From that moment every sentence of my speech was greeted with cheers. The final vote was an overwhelming declaration of young England's desire to do justice to Ireland.

One afternoon when passing by the notice board in the main hall of the University I chanced to see an announcement that a series of lectures on psychoanalysis would be given in the Tavistock Clinic by Dr. H. Crichton Miller. I resolved to attend the lectures, and I doubt if any resolution I ever made had more far-reaching effects upon my whole career than this simple and impulsive resolve. For the lectures turned my mind definitely in the direction of my becoming a priest-analyst. After a few hours spent in hearing Dr. Crichton Miller discuss his cases and

their appropriate treatments, I realized that in Catholic convents and monasteries, among my own brother priests, there were duplicated all the symptoms he described and there was need of precisely the kind of treatment, namely that of analysis, that he prescribed.

While I listened to Dr. Crichton's Miller's lectures, in the small hall of the Tavistock Clinic, overlooking Gordon Square with its great black iron railings, enclosing grassy plots and smoke-stained ancient trees, there passed before my mind in vision a long line of neurotic religious whom I had known, priests and nuns, novices and brothers, and I hoped it would be my destiny to bring relief to them, and lessen their sufferings by means of psycho-analysis. The distinguished lecturer more than once referred to the neuroses that sprang from religious enthusiasms, and he gave solid reasons for his personal opinion that religion was a fertile source of nervous trouble. In the wake of this course of lectures there was born within my mind an idea that was both a purpose and a plan. This idea synthesized many wandering thoughts and ambitions that I had long cherished. It was an inspiration for me, and as I dwelt long and intently upon it my imagination was set aglow. Now, if my superiors approved, as I promised myself fondly they would, I should be able to put to the service of God and the Church the science I had so painstakingly acquired. I felt as Ignatius

himself, the Founder of the Jesuit Order, must have felt, when there first broke upon his mind the idea of banding together men of learning in the service of Christ, or as Frederick Ozanam must have felt when he first conceived the idea of uniting young Catholic laymen in an association devoted to the care of the poor outcasts of Paris.

I saw myself selecting and training in psychology and psycho-therapy a group of intelligent and temperamentally suitable young priests. I saw them, in various places, opening, in connection with Catholic churches and colleges, private clinics where advice and treatment for scruples, delusions, superstitiousness, phobias, sex trouble, and all forms of semi-religious morbidities might be dealt with. I saw them talking and acting as priests who knew and understood well the religious standpoints of their patients, but, on the other hand, utilizing in their counsel and direction the best methods of psycho-therapy. The scrupulous folk, so numerous and so tortured, who hitherto as I well knew had remained incurable even at the hands of the most skilled of spiritual directors, would now have a chance of living happily. Those strange epidemics of "broken heads" that I had witnessed in noviciates, and that neither medical men nor confessors were able to cure, would now be effectively dealt with. Henceforth, if my psycho-spiritual clinics were set up, nuns and monks who were

misfits in religion, and who entered religion under the influence of deceptive emotion, would have an opportunity of securing honourable exits from the religious life that was driving them insane. To my mind there existed a borderland, peopled with strange problems, between religion and psychology and such problems could only be solved by a priest-psychologist, a psychologist who was both a mystic and a theologian.

I might have known that I was doomed to encounter terrible opposition to the plan I had formed. But I was still an idealist clinging tenaciously to the thought that all good men were anxious to further all good work. I was still under the impression that I could count on the co-operation of my Jesuit superiors, as soon as they understood my plan. That I should be looked upon with suspicion as an innovator, and even as a potential heretic, for dabbling in a dangerous science, never crossed my mind. I had no doubts whatsoever, nor any fears about the ultimate success of my plan, and indeed it took a long time before I was completely disillusioned. The first step towards its realization I took at once. I wrote several articles for a Jesuit review, *The Month* (London), on psycho-therapy and to my delight the articles were all duly published and were widely appreciated. One form of the appreciation showed itself in a deluge of letters from all over the country from Catholics who were suffering from "nerves"

which they thought to be connected up with religion.

One of my early "cases" was a difficult and extraordinary one. It was that of a young Catholic woman, of very good family and highly educated, who, on the one hand, was contemplating entering a convent and, on the other, was subject to strange and terrible nerve-spells. These "spells" took the form of the most beastly gluttony which frightened and disgusted her. She felt herself impelled to gorge herself till she almost burst. Then she would shut herself into her room and abandon herself to an orgy of lust. She would refuse to leave her room for two or three days until the hideous spell was past. Then she would return to her refined and pious life and to her dream of becoming a Sacred Heart Sister.

The case was one which exemplified the justice of my plea for Catholic clinics. The girl's trouble was one which was as closely linked with her misconception of religion as with her mismanagement of her emotional life. A non-priest analyst would possibly have misunderstood the religious factor that was driving her on the rocks. A priest unskilled in psychology would possibly have diagnosed the case as one of devil-possession. It was a difficult case, but a curable one, and were it not for the fact that I had no place for my consultations save in a convent parlour . . . where as it happened the girl suspected that passers-by listened at the door. . . I felt the girl

would have responded completely to the treatment.

In the course of my stay in London I had the opportunity of meeting some distinguished and charming people, of the religious, literary and political world. Among them were Maud Roydon and Margaret Bonfield whom I also heard making superb speeches at the Albert Hall. They proved that women orators have power to thrill enormous audiences that remain impervious to appeals of male speakers as experienced and gifted as Lord Asquith. It struck me, indeed, that the public women of England, such as the two I mentioned, were far more spiritual in their outlook than such literary lights as H. G. Wells and Hilaire Belloc. I was amused on one occasion by the apparent terror of Sir Philip Gibbs, when at his own request I produced for a press interview an Irish Republican gunman. The meeting was arranged to take place at the luxurious Automobile Club, and it was not until Sir Philip had perfectly reassured himself of the non-combatant mood of my friend the Irish gunman that he was at all at his ease. Sir Philip at the time was collecting data on the state of Ireland for Mr. Lloyd George the Premier, and he felt it worth while to run the imagined risk of meeting my warlike friend.

Of those with whom I came in contact in London none impressed me more than the celebrated Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Mannix. Tall, lean, as-

cetic, with piercing eyes, and a high forehead that added to his exceptionally dignified bearing, Mannix appeared to me as the replica of the great medieval churchman. When speaking in public his clear incisive voice cut like a sharp knife through the air. Light flashed from his eyes, his whole frame quivered in accord with his emotions, which were tempests held in leash. His power over his audience was remarkable. He held it, gave it vision, whipped it, made it laugh or cry, stirred it to hate or pity or purpose.

I found Archbishop Mannix simple and unassuming, and as ready to discuss the psychology of dreams as political affairs. His stay in London, at this time, was due to the fact that by order of the British Government he had been debarred from visiting Ireland, having been taken off an Atlantic liner by a torpedo destroyer, and landed on the south coast of England. His presence in Hammersmith very much embarrassed his Eminence, Cardinal Bourne, who, as an English Conservative, approved the coercive measures of his Government against Ireland. However, Mannix cared little for the Cardinal's embarrassment and remained as long as suited his purposes. He had a constant stream of visitors to his apartment in the Hammersmith convent and sent many messages of advice and encouragement to the Irish Republicans who were then "under arms."

About the middle of my second year in London

there fell on me unexpectedly a cruel blow. It shook for ever my faith in the justice of my Jesuit superiors.

I was now seventeen years in the Order and the time had come for taking my "last vows." For the lay mind the closest parallel would be the taking out of final citizenship papers. The effect of having the last vows was to establish one in a recognized legal position in the Society. No additional obligations are incurred by the Jesuit taking his last vows, but they have the effect of obligating the Society to the subject who takes them. They entail a recognition by the Society of the canonical status of the subject. When the Society refuses to allow a subject to take his last vows it declares its want of confidence in him. It is, like the refusal of citizenship papers, a declaration that he is an "undesireable." It is therefore, the acme of disgrace, and so serious a punishment that the Society is bound by its own Constitution to make known to the subject the reasons for which the vows are refused or postponed.

I had taken it for granted that I should be allowed to take my vows when the time came. For seventeen years I had been a loyal and devoted subject striving hard to attain to the religious ideal. I loved my Order and had worked hard in its service. Never, save in the one instance when I had disobediently attended a political meeting, had I incurred any grave reprimand from a superior. Yet now, to my horror and

astonishment, I received a letter from my provincial announcing to me that my vows were postponed!

The letter which began with a reference to a microscope I had asked leave to purchase, was as follows:

St. Francis Xavier's
Upper Gardiner Street,
Dublin
March, 1922

My Dear Fr. Barrett
P. C.

I have spoken to Fr. Fahy the new Provincial about your purchase of the $25 microscope and he agrees with me that it is a desirable purchase and hence approves of your getting it.

Since writing to you last, news which I had anticipated came from Rome of postponement of the Vows which I much regret. Fr. Fahy has asked me to inform you as the matter belonged to my Provincialate. The defects for which postponement was made originally are (1) want of obedience and due respect for Superiors: (2) Excessive attachment to your own judgment and will in which defects there does not appear to be marked improvement—at least sufficient to justify last vows. In addition, and this perhaps on the last occasion weighed much in the decision to postpone—an imprudence in speech which showed want of respect for high ecclesiastical dignitaries and

disedified those who heard it as well as want of religious restraint in word, especially about superiors and other matters, were animadverted on. After due consideration it has been thought wise that a change of residence be made and Fr. Provincial (of England) has managed a room for you at Roehampton where you will go at earliest convenience. I do hope with Fr. Provincial that you will do everything in your power by your strict obedience and submissiveness and true religious spirit to edify all and enable all concerned to recommend the last vows soon. You know, I think, that it has been my keen desire to achieve this and I regret to have to write as I do.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely in X

T. V. Nolan S. J.

As far as I could make out this letter meant that in the eyes of certain superiors and consultors of the Irish Province, I was not sufficiently repressed (or "restrained") in respect of asserting my own views and not sufficiently negative and colourless in respect of my conduct. The "high ecclesiastical dignitaries" to whom the letter alluded were, I was certain, the pro-British Irish bishops who during the Irish revolutionary movement had been criticized and condemned by every honest Irishman for their cowardly temporizing policy. Like others I had criticized them,

but only in private. Never in public utterance had I spoken or written one word in criticism of them. Other Jesuits, who had said no less than I about them, had been allowed to take their last vows. Why were mine refused? A few days later there came a letter from the English Provincial, Father William Bodkin. It was worded in a kindly way but brought me no comfort.

31 Farm Street
Berkeley Square
London, W. I.
March 5th, 1922

Dear Father Boyd Barrett

P. C.

I have heard from the late Provincial of your Province (Fr. T. V. Nolan) that Father General wishes you to move immediately from Stamford Hill to Manresa House, Roehampton. Father Rector of Manresa says that he can give you a room. I presume that you will continue to come up daily from Roehampton for your work. Manresa is certainly not as convenient as Stamford Hill as regards attending lectures etc., but of course it can be managed as at present two or three Juniors are up in town every day and they turn in here for lunch. I should very much like to see you and have a little talk before you move. As far as I can make out the move is ordered not on account of any complaints that have been made

against you since you have been at Stamford Hill but because residence in a nondescript house such as Maryfield is not considered desirable for one of your temperament. Anyhow I can honestly say that I have heard no complaints about you either from Fr. Devas or from any of Ours since you have been at Stamford Hill. If you cannot make it convenient to see me here I could possibly be able to call at Maryfield if I knew when you would be in.

With all good wishes,

Yours very sincerely in Christ,

William Bodkin S. J.

(Provincial of the English Province S. J.)

My horizon was now black as night. I who loved the Society saw clearly that the Society had ceased to be a kindly mother to me. There was no hope that I could ever regain her love. A dog with a bad name is worse off in a religious order than anywhere else, for in such a confined atmosphere no fault can ever be forgotten, nor can an official reproach be ever obliterated from the records.

What hope was there now that the post of teaching biology and psychology in Dublin would be given me? What hope that I should be allowed to establish mental clinics for the treatment of the nervous troubles of religious? What hope even that I should be allowed to pursue my studies and my practice of

psycho-therapy? Dark forebodings arose in my mind. The piteous words of Lady Macduff uttered just before her murder by Macbeth's assassins, which had always affected me, came to my mind:

> "Whither should I fly?
> I have done no harm. But I remember now
> I'm in this earthly world; where to do harm
> Is often laudable, to do good sometime
> Accounted dangerous folly; why then, alas,
> Do I put up that womanly defence,
> To say I have done no harm?"

In the bitterness of soul I reminded myself that had I, like many other fellow Jesuits, "taken things easily," kept to the primrose path, shut out big ambitions of doing good and contented myself with lazy routine of community life, I should not have incurred this humiliation and suffering.

It seemed as though my seventeen years of sacrifice and labour had been wasted, and that my fate henceforth would be that of a broken, disgruntled religious, "a poor fellow permanently on the shelf."

Together with the announcement of the postponement of my vows there was the harsh order that I was to pack up at once and take lodgings in the Jesuit noviceship at Manresa. The General was unwilling to allow me to enjoy any longer the freedom

of the Boys' Club on Stamford Hill, where the pleasant companionship of Father Frank Devas had made my life so happy.

As I was desirous, in spite of the injustice done me, to finish my courses in science, I went to live in Manresa. I submitted without a murmur to the severe code of rules that obtained there and to the humiliation of being subjected to close supervision. I read harder than ever and pursued my research with increased energy. But a gloomy foreboding haunted me.

My only recreation was to walk along the magnificent avenues, and through the glorious lawns and woods of Richmond Park. There at least I breathed a little of the freedom that had grown doubly dear to me. I watched children at play, and happy parties picnicking in pleasant spots. Lovers arm in arm roved the loneliest places and startled the wild deer. With envy I watched boaters on the Thames, and white flannelled cricketers in the fields. All seemed to enjoy the right to live their own lives, save only the solitary onlooker. Under the stimulus of my sorrow I had begun to think somewhat cynically and critically about religious life. Much of its glamour had worn off and I was on the verge of disillusionment. Yet I still had hope that in spite of my foreboding when I returned to Ireland some consideration should be shown towards me.

I returned to Ireland in June (1922) and had not long to wait before the second blow fell. I was informed that I was to teach little boys in an out-of-the-way school in Southern Ireland. I knew what the order meant. It was a sentence to an indefinite term of imprisonment.

CHAPTER X

IN PRISON

I WAS now a prisoner in a Jesuit college. My superior had adjudged me guilty and had sent me into the Siberia of his jurisdiction, there to labour in disgrace, during his good pleasure. My confinement was not to be strict in the physical sense. The "bruised reed" was not to be broken but only to be bent to the ground. I was not to be under restraint within high walls nor to be bereft of social intercourse, but I was to be given the humblest kind of work and as much of it as I was able to do.

The prison, Mungret College, was situated on a high bleak plain overlooking the river Shannon. It was not an unhealthy place nor entirely without charm. There was Keeper Hill in the far distance to contemplate, and the great forest of Aherloe across the river, and a few pretty lanes and copses in the vicinity. On the grounds of the college was a mysterious wooded mound, a "fairy glen," which became my haunt in fits of loneliness. The air was bracing and the food was good. My Jesuit com-

panions were for the most part kindly men, though not a few of them were eccentric. But for me the place was bereft of interest and alien from all my tastes. In spite of constant efforts to bear my exile cheerfully, I could not but brood and fret.

Hitherto life had been beautiful to me: a bright field where one played a good game and a happy game. Such hurts and bruises as I received caused but momentary pain. Never had depression gripped me; never had a savage mood mastered me for long. But now I grew serious. Dark days had come, and there was no way open through the gloom. My honour, that last precious possession that had remained to me, even after I had sacrificed all things, was gone. My good name was besmirched. Brother Jesuits were speaking in whispers about me and glancing at me strangely. In their eyes I read the query: "What was his crime? What did Barrett do?"

Long years before, when a novice in Tullabeg, I had often puzzled over the presence in the community of a certain middle-aged father who had no duty allotted to him save that of tending a little patch of garden. "What was he there for?" I asked myself. He was a healthy man and of considerable learning. Why was he not teaching and preaching like other fathers? To me he was a mysterious figure and it was not till years later that I understood. He was a prisoner in Tullabeg, living in dis-

grace and obscurity. A cloud thick and black from the nostrils of a stern superior encompassed him. Now my turn had come, and I was a prisoner.

How swiftly things had moved within three years! I remembered the exaltation of spirit I had enjoyed during my First Mass. I remembered the *Te Deum* I had sung with such intense fervour, at the end of the thirty days' retreat of the tertianship. I remembered the successes I had achieved in London, and the great dream of doing good for the Church as a priest-psychologist that had come to me there. Now these memories mocked me. It seemed as though I was no longer a soldier in the army of Christ. I was an encumbrance. I had to be looked after. What did it all mean? What was to become of me?

Mungret College is built of plain stone, and spread out like an ungainly monster. Within are long cold corridors and untidy halls and dormitories. The boys' chapel is painted gaudily and contains a superabundance of statues and images. The pupils are for the most part poor Irish boys of rude manners and equipped at most with meagre elements of education. The most promising of them, the seminarians or "Apostolics," are taught Latin and diluted philosophy in preparation for the priesthood. My task was to give lessons in reading, writing and the beginnings of arithmetic. To me was also assigned the teaching of catechism, the hearing of the boys'

confessions, and the directing of a sodality. My days were filled up with endless duties and it was only by encroaching on the time allotted for sleep, and by husbanding hours when the boys were at play, that I had leisure to read or write.

Among the community there were some strange characters. One was an elderly father with whom I had much to do. William Kane was his name, but he was known as "The Judge" on account of the real or reputed fact that before his admission into the Society he had occupied a judiciary post on the west coast of Africa. He was a tall, angular man, sandy-haired, a good scholar but extraordinarily absent-minded. At table he used to invite himself aloud to bread or tea or butter. "Kane," he would say, "pass me the butter if you please." Then having helped himself, he would add: "Thank you, Kane!" Arriving at his own door he would knock, and tell himself to come in. "Come in, Kane." He was quite an extraordinary figure as he rode his bicycle through the main street of Limerick city, his bony elbows and knees stretched out on each side to the full, his large shabby hat stuck miraculously to the back of his head, and as often as not whistling or singing a stanza of "Father O'Flynn," to the amazement of onlookers of whose presence he was completely oblivious.

Another member of the community, Father Edward

Cahill, famous of late in this country for his extraordinary book about Freemasons, was no less bony and angular than Father Kane, and hardly less eccentric though in another way. With hands folded in the sleeves of his clerical coat, he walked about approving and blessing everything in a patronizing way. "Certainly, certainly," he would say, looking very wise and profound. He was the centre of extreme devotionalism of the college, and encouraged many fantastic forms of piety among the boys. He delighted to tell the awestruck country lads hair-raising stories that he had picked up in Catholic papers about the devil-worshipping Freemasons. The rest of the community laughed at Father Cahill's simplicity, while the boys looked on him as a prophet.

Though a prisoner I was left unmolested and was even allowed to indulge a fancy that took possession of me. In the farm there was a pony that had little work to do: a "yellow pony," ill-tempered but fast and strong. I sought and obtained permission to ride it "once in a while." I knew the more staid members of the community would think me mad for indulging in such a form of exercise. but I was almost desperate and had to have some kind of outlet. So I began to travel the more unfrequented country roads on my yellow pony.

One day I rode to the forest of Aherloe some eight miles distant. I soon got lost amid its criss-crossing

paths and found a thrill of joy in not knowing where I was going. I rode on and on, cutting down the sides of deep declivities. Many times my pony stumbled against decayed stumps of trees. When at length I reached a broad road that led back to Limerick city it was growing dark and I had to canter fast to reach the college in time for supper. On a few occasions I rode to the very beautiful Shannon Falls at Doonass. There the lordly river takes a sudden turn and breaks grandly over large black boulders, roaring with joy and dashing white spray in the trees that watch its mad caprice. In the turmoil and riot of Doonass my spirit was refreshed and I returned with a more docile heart to my daily task. Other times I rode along country by-ways following as well as I could the course of the Limerick Fox Hunt. I dared not join in the hunt, as it was forbidden to do so, but it was something to watch the black hats and red coats bobbing over hedges in the distance and to hear the halloos of the beagles. One on the best riders to the hunt was a cousin of mine, a Mrs. Halpin, and if perchance she saw me on my yellow pony gazing wistfully at the sport she would gaily wave her whip in my direction and call on me to join in.

As it was unusual for a Jesuit to ride, the news went far and wide among the members of my Order that "Barrett was galloping round the country on a

white horse." Well-intentioned friends advised me forthwith to abandon the practice. The advice was kindly and well-meant, but why, I asked myself, should I follow it? It was no sin to ride . . . it was nobody's affair but my own since I had the needed permission. I felt it would be weakness on my part to surrender to criticism my one real form of amusement. Besides I had reached the point where I cared little what my clerical brethren thought or said about me.

There lived in the neighbourhood of Mungret, on a vast but uncultivated estate, in a more or less ruined mansion, an Irish Catholic peer, Lord Emly. With Lady Emly as his sole companion, and a few old servants to attend to the housekeeping, he lived a life of genteel retirement. He was a man of sixty, of immense stature and old-time courtesy. He read a great deal, both classical literature and science, and worked out in his own mind original if impracticable schemes of all kinds, political, economic and agricultural. He loved to talk for hours on end, smoking the while fine cigars, his one remaining luxury.

It was the custom of the Mungret Jesuits to say Sunday mass in his mansion, *Tervoe*. It was considered an onerous duty, and the task of chatting after breakfast with Lord Emly was hated and feared by most. Yet he was known to be a very lonely and scholarly man and to relish a chat with a Jesuit.

When it came to my turn to say mass for the Emly household I had misgivings and also expected to be bored. But what was my surprise to find the old aristocrat the most interesting man I had ever met. Instinctively we liked each other and instinctively we found a deep common interest in discussing mystical experiences. He was extremely psychic and had had telepathic communications of the most extraordinary kind. No man ever came so near convincing me of the reality of "second-sight" and "materialization" as this wonderful old gentleman. For hours and hours we chatted and when it came to the time when I had to leave there was a deep note of loneliness in his voice.

Lord Emly and I became fast friends. He brought me through the ruins of his once splendid mansion, and through the gardens that in earlier years he and Lady Emly had laid out with infinite taste. His glorious trees had to be cut down to pay off mortgages, and his game was robbed as he could no longer afford keepers. His pride in his family and his attachment to the "faith of his fathers" were his two passions, but they left empty vast spaces in his heart. He had no heir to succeed him, and the future stretched out before him bereft of everything but regrets.

He gave me his gun one day and told me to shoot a few brace of pheasants. When I came back empty-

handed and with a doleful expression on my face his lip curled, but he said nothing. It was as though my lack of skill with a gun were a crime of shame in his eyes. He did not fully realize that the pheasants were both few and shy and that it would have required an expert shot to kill a few brace.

Though I was located in so out-of-the-way a place as Mungret the need for special help brought to me priests and neurotic Catholics from afar. My writings had been read among the Irish clergy, and "Barrett's cure for the nerves" had been discussed among them. The result was that besides many letters asking for advice, I had visitors almost every week who looked to me for help. Sometimes they stopped in hotels in Limerick. On free afternoons I rode to town to see them, and as far as possible to treat them. They were for the most part advanced cases of melancholia or "scruples" and without facilities for treatment it was difficult to do much for them. I succeeded, however, in effecting some cures, and the result was an increase in the demands made upon me. My superiors interfered and put obstacles in the way. But they could not absolutely forbid me to give psycho-therapeutic advice as I insisted that it was inextricably mixed up with spiritual counsel.

One of the strange cases that fell to my lot at this time was that of a priest, a gentle, scholarly man,

who belonged to a diocese in the south of Ireland. He had lived most of his life in a market-town when he was suddenly appointed by his bishop to take charge of a country parish. Congratulated by his friends he accepted the appointment with misgivings. He had never been to see this particular parish, but had learned from hearsay that it was a rich and beautiful place. One summer evening he drove to his new assignment to take possession of his parochial house, and found to his dismay that *it lay at the foot of a steep mountain.* On the instant he was struck with an overwhelming fear of the great bleak monster that stood towering over him. He passed a sleepless night and fled the next day a nervous wreck. Again and again at the persuasion of his ecclesiastical brethren he made attempts to reside in his parish but always with the same result. It was incomprehensible to him that he should fear a mountain, but the fear was all too real. He tried a holiday and change of air to "recover his nerves." He took hot baths and electric treatment but all to no avail. He was good and zealous and there was no skeleton in the cupboard of his mind. His prayers and the prayers of others on his behalf were of no apparent use in the overcoming of his fear, and so at last he came to a priest-psychologist.

His case, and other cases of the kind, appeared to me to reinforce my claim that there was real need

of priest-psychologists, but I failed to get my superiors to see eye to eye with me. They held that had this priest forced himself to obey his bishop and continue in his parish in spite of everything, all would have gone well. I held, on the other hand, that such a line of "treatment" would as likely as not have resulted in a tragedy.

The good pastor was in a very broken-down condition of nerves when he came to me. I was able to see him only a few times and at widely separated intervals. However, I discovered the source of his complex, which dated back to a curious and upsetting experience he had had when a young missioner in a Western State of the United States. I was able to steady his nerves and get him back to work, though not yet in his own parish. I set him on the road to complete recovery, but on account of the difficulties put in my path I could not see even this case through.

One day an Apostolic who was studying in the college came to me. He was a fine boy, American born, and known to be one of the brightest and best students. He told me he had permission from Father Cahill to put his trouble before me and to seek my assistance. All day long the thought, or fancy, or fear was in his mind that "there might be no God." He described with tears in his eyes how everywhere he went, whether to class or to the chapel or even to the refectory, the words kept ringing in his ears:

"Perhaps there is no God. . . . Perhaps there is no God." Try as he might, pray as he might, he failed to escape from the horror of the inner voice that filled his ears.

Then he told me in what circumstances the obsession originated. One evening at Benediction, when he was bowed down in adoration of the Sacred Host, feeling full of faith and joy, the obsessing thought had come to him. He sought to drive it away as a temptation of the devil, but the more he tried the louder and stronger the impression became. Awake all night, he had tossed about in agony thinking that God had taken away his faith.

He came to me only when all other counsel and advice had proved futile, and when already the trouble was deeply rooted. I took a great interest in the poor boy. My heart went out to him. He was deeply attached to the college and to his vocation, and profoundly upset at seeing everything jeopardized by his "nervousness."

The source of the trouble, as I discovered, lay far back in the past. I did not reveal to him everything I discovered through the analysis. I made up my own mind that the voice "perhaps there is no God" was in reality his inner self struggling to tell him that he was unsuited for the seminary, and trying to open his eyes to the fact that "perhaps he had no vocation." "Perhaps I have no vocation" was the

real meaning of the voice. He had with apparent success repressed his doubts about his "supernatural call" . . . and the inevitable reaction had occurred!

By my treatment I set him on his feet again, when an unfortunate occurrence, the sudden death of a relative, almost unhinged his mind. It was for the best that he was finally sent home, for he would never have been happy or successful as a priest. I found in this case, in which as I say I took a deep interest, a striking illustration of what is in reality very common, namely, religious self-deception.

In spite of the fits of depression that at times seized me I threw myself whole-heartedly into the work that had been given me to do. I interested myself in the boys, even in the little tots to whom I had to be almost a mother as well as a teacher. I won the confidence of boys who had troubles, and helped them to the best of my ability. Many Jesuits used to consult me in secret, not as one who was thought to be far advanced in virtue, but as one who could be counted on to give honest and practical advice. In my spare moments I wrote a treatise on the "New Psychology" which after a long delay, due to the hostility of Jesuit censors, was published in the United States. At the invitation of the editor of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Review* I began a series of articles on psycho-therapy, sending each article first of all to the Jesuit censors of the province. My first article

was duly censored and published. Number two was to follow the next month. It was a moderate and perfectly orthodox article. I sent it to my superior in good time with a request that it might be read by the censors as soon as possible so that if any changes were to be made I might have time to make them before the date of printing. After an interminable delay my MS. was returned to me with a note to say that it had been rejected by the censors. I sat down and wrote another, also a perfectly orthodox article, and sent it post haste to the superior as a substitute, with a new request for immediate attention. After a long time this was also rejected. The time for printing had by now elapsed and my second article would be at best in time for the third issue after my first article. I sat down and wrote still another substitute. This also was rejected by the Jesuit censors and it was only then intimated to me that no article of my series would be allowed published unless I presented to the Jesuit censors all the series together. Had this request been made at first it might have been considered fair, but under the circumstances I thought it most unjust. Meanwhile the rumour got around among the secular clergy that I was writing heresy and that my views were unsound and condemned by the Order. In despair I dropped the series, knowing full well that nothing I now wrote on psychology would be allowed

publication in Ireland.

At length my health began to suffer from worry and overwork. I found it hard to sleep and harder still to keep my soul in peace. Moods of savage resentment swept through me at times and I began to ask myself whether it was worth while trying to continue a hopeless fight. Everything I did seemed to be misunderstood and misinterpreted.

When in a mood of particularly deep despondency I used to make my way alone to the fairy glen to which I have referred. It was a mound covered with hawthorns and hazels, lying to the north of the college. There I used to throw myself down in the brushwood, listening to the birds and watching the cattle grazing in the distance. If it was spring there were early primroses and violets within reach of my hands. If it was winter there was a broad lake to watch and the wild duck that flew over it. Close to the mound there was an ancient well, and my imagination pictured the olden days when Irish kerns on their way to battle quenched their thirst there. I could hear too in fancy the hymns of the monks of old who dwelt on these lands.

Once I retired there to think over a new problem that had presented itself to me. It was February, 1924, and two years had passed since my vows had been postponed. A letter had come from my provincial saying that I might take my vows. Apparently,

the Jesuit General had reconsidered the position he had taken up with respect to me, and was now willing to "give me my colours." What had made him change his mind? I had not become more docile, more respectful to superiors, or less self-willed. If anything, I had steadily disimproved in these respects since my blighting disappointment of two years before. The wound I had suffered had not healed. The news that the provincial's letter conveyed failed to awaken any joy or gladness in my heart. The Society might now express its willingness to bind itself to me, but I was in no way flattered or encouraged by its offer. Should I refuse to take these last vows? I pondered deeply over the question.

I was a prisoner, not only in the sense of being interned in Mungret College, but in the deeper and broader sense of being mentally held in thrall by religious fears of many kinds. I had not yet begun to question any point of doctrine. I was in terror of hell, in terror of the sin of disobedience, in terror of freethinking in matters of religion. I was a bird in a cage afraid even to flutter my wings. Was escape possible through the strong barriers of Catholic principles that enclosed my mind? What an adventure: what marvellous skill and daring it would require to break through, keeping the while my soul in peace and my conscience pure! Why should I not begin to think things over? When the day came

for taking vows I took them in a perfunctory way. I took them as one performs a commonplace act of ritual. I took them as an act of obedience, not as a personal, sacrificial act. In no way did I increase my obligations by taking them. I should have refused to take them had I been perfectly free to do so, but they were morally forced upon me. Had I refused point-blank to take them, I should have precipitated a crisis for which I was not prepared. I did not yet know my own mind fully and I was still a thousand leagues from mental emancipation.

Not long after this vow ceremony there happened the second and last "escapade" of my life as a Jesuit. This, like the former scrape, which had almost caused my ordination to be postponed, was connected with nationalism. It was an act of deliberate "imprudence" on my part: in a sense it was an act of protest and rebellion.

Briefly the circumstances were as follows. The Irish jails were at the time filled to overflowing with Republican prisoners. These brave, patriotic lads were not only felons in the eyes of the Free State Government, but they were under the ban of the Church. Most of them had been excommunicated by the bishops for their political activities. They were treated so harshly in prison that they declared a hunger strike. Many of them were now dying, and their friends and relatives outside were appealing

to priests to have public prayers for them. The priests, afraid of offending their lordships the bishops refused.

In Limerick city, Republican sympathizers began to hold meetings at night in the open square, at which prayers were recited, but which no priest dared attend. Another Jesuit, Father Daniel Fitzgibbon, and I were appealed to. We discussed the matter together, and resolved to attend the meetings and recite prayers for the prisoners. We did so, deliberately, and knowing well that there would be serious consequences for us.

We were reported to Rome for our conduct, and penalized in various ways. Father Fitzgibbon took his penances with admirable patience, and in a Christian spirit; I took mine cynically and morosely. I knew that what we had done was an act of charity, a human kindly act, no matter how superiors looked upon it, no matter how it embarrassed them vis-à-vis of the Irish bishops, and I refused to apologize or repent. I thought that superiors were subordinating justice to ecclesiastical diplomacy in punishing us. I was disgusted when they published in the papers, without our consent, an equivocal apology for what had occurred, as though Father Fitzgibbon and I had come to recognize the error of our ways.

The reprimands I received produced no change of heart in me. Shortly afterwards (this time un-

known to my superiors) I co-operated in rescuing from danger a hunted Republican felon. He was lying sick to death in a hut in a lonely wood. The only chance of saving his life was to get him at once, in disguise, to a hospital. The plan was to dress him as a priest and with a real priest as his companion, to drive him through the cordons of soldiers into Limerick where a friendly doctor had promised to take care of him. I was taken by his relatives to his lair. There I had first of all to shave off his beard which was large and shaggy. The poor fellow fainted twice from weakness while I was doing so. Then I dressed him as a priest, and helped to carry him to the car that was waiting. On the way into Limerick I feared he would die, he was so ill and exhausted. However, he bore the journey better than I expected and was delivered safely into the doctor's care. He recovered later and made his escape to America.

About this time, towards the end of my second and happily my last year at Mungret, I met with a slight accident, resulting in the dislocation of my shoulder. I was sent to Dublin for treatment and there renewed my acquaintance with a doctor whom I had known years before. He was a pious Catholic and a friend of the Jesuits. He remarked on my nervous, run-down condition and I gave him some of my confidence. Unfortunately I was imprudent

enough to put to him a speculative question as to whether he thought a religious would be justified in leaving his Order should serious ill health threaten him in the alternative of his continuing. He seemed puzzled by my question, and asked for time to think it over. The fact that I put such a question showed that at this time the question of leaving the Jesuits had presented itself to my mind, but I had not as yet considered it seriously. The doctor, who attached more importance to his religious scruples than to his professional honour, reported to a Jesuit father the question I had put him. From that moment my superiors became seriously alarmed about me.

I received a letter from my provincial soon afterwards. It contained the following passage. "Would you like to go to New York for two years? Father Kelly, the provincial [of the New York Province], would I think be able to set you at work that would be congenial to you: he and I discussed the matter when at Rome." I answered at once that I should like to go on condition that I should be given work that was congenial. He answered on July 25. "I shall send a line to Father Kelly to ask him to give you facilities for your special work." As the sequel will show I left Ireland for the United States in October the same year, but before I departed one more cruel disappointment was mine.

A professorship in education fell vacant in Galway University. I was known in Galway University and influential members of the staff approached my superiors with a view to securing my nomination for the post. They considered that I was eminently fitted to fill it on account of my knowledge of modern psychology and kindred sciences and on account of my successes in the practical art of teaching. My superiors agreed to allow me to compete for the post. I secured testimonials from important scientists, one of whom, Carl Spearman, the Grote Professor of Psychology at the University of London, wrote as follows:

71 Kensington Gardens Square, W.2
26-8-1924

I am very glad to comply with the request of the Rev. Dr. Boyd Barrett for a testimonial on the occasion of his applying for a professorship in education. My own acquaintance with his work has reference to psychology, and in particular to his studies about the nature and educability of acts of will. In this field he has published an experimental investigation which I believe to be of very remarkable value. His later work on this topic has had, I am told, an extraordinarily large sale. In addition to having shown much power of research, he is in my opinion an exceptionally attractive lecturer. As far as I

can judge he is like to fill the post of professor with great distinction.

(Signed) C. SPEARMAN.

Grote Professor of Psychology
The University of London.

The prospects of my being appointed to the Galway professorship were exceedingly good. I had no rival to fear. The position would have enabled me in an eminent degree to carry on in free time my work of psycho-therapy for the benefit of my co-religionists, lay and ecclesiastical. The Society too would have benefited financially and in other ways as well. My relatives—above all my mother, who was profoundly worried by the thought of my being sent to America—were delighted at the idea of my possible professorship. In my own heart I knew that Galway would, should I attain it, see the revival of my apostolic spirit. I should become reconciled again, in all probability, to religious life. It seemed as though the clouds which had gathered in dense dark masses over me were on the point of breaking. My heart, though a little embittered, was not poisoned. At this moment I could have been saved for the Church and for the Society, had human kindness inspired my superiors. But the worst happened. Out of a clear sky *I was ordered to withdraw my candidature, and prepare for immediate departure to the States.*

CHAPTER XI

A NEW COUNTRY

I HAD clung desperately to a threefold love: that of my religion, my own folk and my country. My dreams had been inspired by that love, and it had kept my heart young. My native hills and the voices of friends were as dear to me as they could be to any Irishman. And when from the deck of the White Star liner *Celtic* I watched the Northern mist engulfing all I wanted and all I knew, I felt sad. The flecks of foam on the wave and the tireless sea-birds seemed no less desolate than I.

Long into the night I paced the deck alone etching in deep lines precious memories—things that I had seen and felt while preparing for my journey—wan faces of patients in a hospital—a visit to my old home, Terracina, and to my Alma Mater, Clongowes—words whispered to me by brother Jesuits, whose loyalty to a friend could make them forget for a moment religious prudence—a reunion with my brothers and a last parting from the best of mothers.

It was the evening before I left Dublin that I saw my brothers for the last time. We stood about a large open hearth where coals burned, above which was a life-like painting of my mother done in oils by Joe. We talked of old times and of the changes in ourselves and in our fortunes. Charlie, once romantic and vain, was now a quiet, unassuming man, deeply religious and devoted to his five bright boys. His hair was grey and his voice subdued and gentle. Joe, nearly six feet in height, with the bearing of a soldier, spoke with assurance. The surly independent boy of Dunlaoghaire days had developed into a self-reliant man, aloof and somewhat cynical.

Charlie, incurably optimistic, was prophesying that by my writings I would do "immense good" in the States. "They will make you the head of a great Catholic University," he said, "and you will achieve all your plans for Catholic clinics." Joe listened without comment. He understood much better how my mind was working, and he guessed there was trouble ahead, but he did not wish to hurt Charlie by any dire prophecy in my regard. "Don't work too hard over there," he said to me. "You'll find the life trying at first. Just have a look round and take things easy and come back as soon as you can." Then thinking as was his wont of mother, he reminded me to write often to her. "You know," he added, "how she will be counting the days till you're

back!"

How different these two men, my brothers, were. One, absorbed in the interests of the Church, was anxious that "the glory of God" would come out of my journey to America. Joe, tender-hearted in spite of his stately sullenness, cared little for the interests of religion and everything for human happiness. Joe could not see a hobo, hatless or hungry, without coming to his help. A beggar whom he would see through his office window, trudging the street in splashing rain, would be signalled by him to come to the door. He knew full well that things were going amiss with me in religious life, and he rejoiced when he saw signs of my awakening to the situation. But Charlie, gentlest and kindliest of men though he was, could not conceive of my finding happiness elsewhere than in the apostolic career of the priesthood. We had a last drink and smoke together. Charlie asked me to keep his boys, especially Rupert and Stan, in mind when I was saying mass. Joe, as was his wont when more than ordinarily moved, reached for his Catullus. Then he read with feeling the tenderest poem ever penned over a lost brother.

"Multas per gentes et multa per æquora vectus." When he reached the last line he closed his eyes and repeated.

"Atque in perpetuum, Frater, ave atque vale." ("And for ever and ever, dear brother, hail and

farewell.")

In the morning that followed I called early on my mother and brought her to a local convent chapel where I said mass for her. Together we returned home for breakfast. We had arranged beforehand that we were going to be calm and sensible. Mother promised that she would be brave and not allow herself to be fretful. It was all very well to arrange things but when it came to carrying out the parting it was another matter. As the last minutes that we were to have together were running out I saw the lines and wrinkles that furrowed her dear face disappear one by one. In the flush of her sorrow she was my young mother once again. I saw telescoped in vision all my loving associations with her—a long thread of gold woven into my life. When I was saying "Mother dearest, good-bye . . . God bless you," my voice quivered. She stood like a statue, dazed . . . her hands reaching towards me. I kissed her, seized my things, and was gone. But from my car, when I looked back, her face now pale as death was pressed against the window pane, and one worn hand was raised feebly making an inarticulate sign that she was going too . . . in spirit.

I made a few acquaintances on board the *Celtic*. There was a wealthy New York society woman who appeared very anxious to know what "my message" to the American people was. There was a German

pork-packer of Chicago who seemed to enjoy my Irish stories, and who used to emphasize his own remarks with the expression "from hell to breakfast." There was a neurotic, elderly Jewess who insisted on playing chess with me, and who displayed no little irritation when defeated. There was also an Irish American bishop whose ring I kissed so respectfully that he invited me (though without success) to his bridge and whiskey parties.

Arrived in New York I found everything—everything without exception—*different*. Business, religion, dress, ways of thinking and talking and living were all new to me. None of the things I now saw and heard were familiar. To me America was in every sense a foreign country; more foreign that I had found Belgium to be, when I had first lived there eighteen years before. I had not expected that things would be so strange, and I was surprised that visitors to America had not, as far as I knew, dwelt upon the immense difference that exists between the old and the new world. My first impressions, though they were interspersed with wonder and amazement, were not favourable. It was discouraging for me to realize how big would be the task of adapting myself to the new civilization. Evidently I had lost much of the venturesomeness of youth, and much of its plasticity, else I should not have been so nonplussed at what lay before me. I should have understood bet-

ter what "outliving the fashions of Europe" meant, and I should have been prepared for new creations in art, architecture and modes of expression. I had heard, of course, of "quick living" and "tension" and "pep," but when I saw it translated into action I was thunderstruck. The people I met in New York were quick at understanding me, as though they were skilled in reading a dead language, but it was quite another matter for me to understand them. I felt like a country cousin crossing the threshold of a fashionable house where a foreign language is spoken.

From the top of a Fifth Avenue bus I saw traffic congestion for the first time. It was something as strange to me as would be the tossing of rocks and sands (or whatever else happens) at the bottom of the sea. Here was an appalling consequence of the building of a city in the sky! I travelled uptown in a subway and felt myself within the gates of a noisy and hideous hell. But it was quick and efficient travelling, and suggested to me that man by cruel blows had made a galley-slave of Nature. Everyone hurried, everyone was tense, no one breathed deeply. Women took mirrors and boxes of cosmetics from hand-bags and powdered and painted themselves. I was amazed that they were not ashamed to do so in public, and I missed the old-fashioned reserve. Even girls, obviously in their teens, "made up" in the street-cars. If they had pared their nails or brushed their teeth in my

presence I should not have been more astonished. "Beauty parlours" everywhere; "shoe shiners" everywhere! "cruising" taxis everywhere; food shops everywhere. No children, no beggars, no old men or old women, but smartly dressed young folk to right and left, milling, talking, hurrying . . . and too busy (or was it too suspicious?) to help a stranger with directions.

The day after my arrival I resolved to call on my publishers, P. J. Kennedy & Sons in Barclay Street. I heard that street was near the City Hall. When I found myself in that vicinity I sought in vain for further information from passers-by. At length in despair I approached a "cop." He told me, rather curtly, that it was "at the city side of the Woolworth Building." I stood aside from him and looked around. Everywhere there was "city." What did he mean? Had there been farms or pasture in any direction I should have been able to orient myself, but there was not even a tree in sight! Later in the day I wished to go "uptown" without having yet grasped the fact that "uptown" meant north and high street numbers; whereas "downtown" meant south and low numbers. I determined to try travelling on the "L" and ascended a stairway to a platform. "I want to go uptown," I said to the man in the change box. "Cross the avenue to the other side," he answered, "this is the downtown side." I descended, crossed a street, and

mounted stairs again. I found the same change box and the same man within. It seemed strange but I enquired once more. He looked at me and laughed. "You've crossed the *street*," he said, "I told you to cross the *avenue*." Going north and south, as I learned eventually, were the *avenues*, while east and west ran the *streets*.

My Jesuit hosts at West Sixteenth Street were kind and hospitable, but it seemed to me that their religious world was permeated with a different spirit. They did not at all realize that for me New York was a foreign country and that I should be as helpless in it as I should have been in Pekin. They took it for granted that I should be able to "find my way around," that I should see the baseball games or run down to Rockaway Beach for a swim. It was summer weather when I arrived and my cloth suit and woolen shirt and socks made my day a continuous Turkish bath; but I had neither the knowledge nor the wherewithal to find the right adjustment to the climate. My hair was cut in Dublin style, my *boots* were heavy, I carried a walking-stick and gloves and a felt hat distinctly European in pattern, and it may have been that the smart young fathers of West Sixteenth Street thought it too great an ordeal to walk out with me, dressed as I was in old-world style.

I found myself enormously impressed by the spirit of confidence and independence, as well as by the

alertness, of Americans with whom I brushed shoulders. There was no sign of sleep in their eyes nor of self-pity in their attitude. Theirs was a brave, gay, ready-to-work exterior, and it was charming to hear the word "brother" used when they were lending a helping hand. The care-worn, anxious look that haunts so many faces in Ireland was absent. Americans, I knew, had troubles and vexations like others, but they kept them hidden from passers-by. I saw labourers *working*, getting their jobs done quickly, and that was an unusual sight for my eyes. When I read newspaper acounts of "pulpit topics" and realized the vagaries of religious ideas and the superficiality of the ethical principles that were being taught, I was surprised. Then followed a veritable shock when in the sporting page of a Catholic paper I read: "St. Mikes Wallop Blessed Virgins"; "Hebrews Battle Sacred Hearts for Court Title."

After a few days I enquired of the superior what my destination was to be and he informed me that I had been appointed to teach *sociology* at Georgetown University. I questioned him as to whether there was not some mistake, saying that I had understood that I was to teach psychology. But he told me that there was no mistake, adding that the Dean of Georgetown was expecting me. I found to my surprise that Georgetown University was distant a seven-hour train ride from New York. The superior ad-

vised me to get a Pullman ticket; he had to explain to me what that meant.

When I reached Georgetown I interviewed the Dean, the Reverend Edmund Walsh S. J., who has since become famous for his writings and lectures against the Soviet Union. Father Walsh was a stout, affable man, of soft voice and ponderous diction. He was self-possessed in manner, though his eyes shifted restlessly. He seemed anxious to give me the impression that he was carrying a heavy burden on his shoulders, and alluded more than once to his diplomatic activities.

I was not slow in expressing to him the surprise I felt at finding myself appointed to a chair in sociology of which science I knew absolutely nothing. I told him that my provincial had promised that I should be employed in teaching my own science which was psychology. "I came," I said, "on the explicit understanding that I should be given facilities for my work in psychology and psycho-therapy."

Father Walsh seemed nonplussed at my attitude and tried to talk me into admitting that I knew sociology, but he failed in his efforts. The outcome of our interview was that for the present my sole duty was to be the teaching of catechism. Towards the end of the year, should he find it possible to arrange it, Father Walsh promised to call on me to give a course of lectures in psychology. Meanwhile I was honoured by

being catalogued as "Professor of Psychology" in Georgetown University.

I had a great deal of free time and was glad of the opportunity of seeing Washington. I thought it very beautiful, lacking only in the mellowness of European capitals. I was struck in particular by the variety and splendour of the great embassies and private houses of the citizens. The public buildings, the public parks and drives surpassed anything I had ever seen.

I was delighted with Georgetown University. For the first time I made the acquaintance of the American lad, and I was charmed with his light-hearted, clean, independent spirit, his optimism, and his love of life and sport. He seemed to me infinitely more manly and more progressive than the college lad of the old country. I thought the grounds about Georgetown beautiful, in particular the valley-wood behind the buildings, which became my favourite haunt. There I studied the fauna and flora of my new country, watching the grey squirrel, the cardinal bird, and a host of birds and insects quite new to me. Blue sky, and unstinted sunshine such as I had never known, filled me with happiness, and gave me renewed vitality, which seemed almost another kind of life. It came home to me that in such a land as this, where there were no damp overhanging clouds to depress one, it should be easy to be free and brave. In such

sunlight, in such clear air, under such high bright skies, amid such buoyant youthfulness, one could brush away the cobwebs of the mind and shake loose from the shackles of fear.

But the hope and confidence that my first contacts with the new life gave me were before long dissipated. I had counted on American Jesuits acceding to my wishes in respect of conducting a clinic for the treatment of religious neuroses. I was sadly disappointed. On most flimsy pretexts permission was refused me. As time went on I discovered to my dismay that American Jesuits were more reactionary even than those at home. The things that had hurt me so much in Ireland reappeared. Articles that I wrote on psychotherapy, that I knew to be perfectly sound and orthodox, were rejected as "dangerous" by Jesuit censors. Obstacles of every kind were put in the way of my lecturing, and I found myself once more surrounded by evidences of fear and suspicion.

The editor of *America*, Father Tierney S. J., had asked for a series of articles on the new psychology. He was very pleased with what I sent him and began to publish them. After the third article appeared the Jesuit Provincial, Father L. Kelly, forbade him to publish any more of my articles. To me, Father Kelly offered no explanation of his interference. Later, when the authorities of Fordham University invited me to give a series of lectures on the

same matter and announced the lectures in the press, Father L. Kelly again interfered and forbade them. Though he subsequently reconsidered his prohibition, he only allowed them under stringent and humiliating conditions. It soon became plain to me that instead of getting facilities for my work in America, there were only additional obstacles put in its way.

As soon as I realized that I was a pariah among my own brethren, the new-won brightness passed out of my life and I became nervous and sleepless. The duties of religious life became increasingly difficult, and some of them repulsive. On one occasion when the provincial, Father Kelly, to whom I have referred, visited Georgetown, it unluckily fell to my lot to read out the Litanies (the community prayers) in the chapel. This meant that at a certain moment I should rise from my place among the brethren, walk to the altar steps, in front of all, and with the eyes of all on me, read aloud the prayers. I had always found this an unpleasant ordeal, and somewhat nerve-racking, but to face it now, especially when it happened that this spiteful little provincial was present, and when a cloud hung over me, was almost impossible.

As the time drew near for rising from my place to go to the altar, a cold perspiration broke out on my forehead. I was quite unnerved, yet I was unwilling to admit my weakness by asking another to read the prayers in my place. Then, when I was in a verit-

able agony, just at the moment for arising, an unexpected act of friendliness rescued me. A young priest, Father Louis Gallagher, who somehow had sensed that things were going hard with me, and that to read the Litanies in the presence of Father Kelly would be an ordeal for me, slipped out in the nick of time and read the prayers in my place. Long since Father Louis has forgotten all about his kind act. He has forgotten it, no doubt, because he has done many thousand other kind things since that day.

At Washington I heard lectures which foreshadowed the new humanism that seems destined to become the "religion" of a large section of Americans. I was not unaffected by them, though I doubted then, and still doubt the capacity of humanism to satisfy the craving of the human heart for contact with a Divine Oversoul. I heard the Reverend President of Georgetown in an address to the assembled boys and professors make a vainglorious attempt to harmonize the principles of Leo XIII with those of the American Constitution. After his address I called upon him and asked him how, as a *Roman Catholic theologian,* he could describe as "perfect" a Constitution which made no provision for the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church. He was embarrassed by my question and attempted no reply. At times I visited the scholarly Father Tondorf, the Jesuit seismologist, since dead, and admired his patient, devoted work for

science. Round his little laboratory he had flowers and vegetables growing, and he seemed no less interested in the unfolding of his lettuce leaves than in his *tremblements de terre*. Sometimes, on a sunny afternoon, I used to go canoeing with a few students, and once on an Easter day I surprised them by accepting their challenge to swim in the cold and rapid current of the Potomac. I marvelled at the graceful diving and swift swimming strokes that they had mastered, and at their daring to plunge into the water after consuming innumerable "hot dogs." They used to tell me how, during holidays, they worked as painters, or truck drivers, or "lifeguards," gentlemen though they were, and I sensed how far apart were the snobbish and usually impecunious students of Dublin from these realistic democrats of young America.

Towards the end of the year I was at last called upon to give a course in psychology. I gave, under the heading "Humanology," the principles and methods of modern psycho-therapy. My lectures were crowded and apparently appreciated by the students. Many of them, as the result of hearing my views, used to come to consult me on the practical problems of their lives. They put their religious and moral difficulties before me and seemed relieved when I found it right to put liberal interpretations of things before them. Sometimes they would challenge me with answers they had received to their questions from reactionary

fathers. I noticed how much they resented dogmatic teachings, and how pertinently they questioned "authority."

Many of them told me about their girls and their love-affairs, and it was surprising for me to learn at what an early age American boys enjoy the companionship of girls. I learned much from them about co-education, its good points and its bad points. I was surprised to find how well-informed they were about social problems, and how confident they were of realizing their ambitions in spite of the difficulties that faced them. I could not but see that they were less assiduous in their studies and less patient in acquiring scholarship than the students of the old world, but I realized at the same time that the distractions of their lives were very great.

Meanwhile I had been reading and thinking much about the Church and about the doctrines and dogmas that hitherto I had so gladly and fully accepted. My outlook was changing. I had come to distrust the ecclesiastical mind and to suspect its sincerity. I had lost my enthusiasm for the success of the Church —and doubted the justice and wisdom of identifying modern Catholicism with the teachings of Jesus. I was by now appealing in prayer to Jesus over the head of the Church. I went farther and appealed to Jesus *against* certain teachings of the Church. I did not want to lose Jesus, but I did not mind so

much about losing faith in the Church as it was constituted at the time. I found I could pray better while walking in the morning light around the valley-wood behind the college, than when kneeling at my *prie-Dieu*. I was unconsciously seeking for a simpler religion. I was shaking myself free of the forms that my long years of training had superimposed upon my spirit.

It was now inevitable that a clash with my superiors would come and that I should have to face a conflict. I should have to choose between my right to think and live in my own way, and the prompting of obedience to live according to the strict doctrine of the Church. But when would the clash come? In a month or in a year? I knew that the first shot in a war is usually unpremeditated though the war itself be inevitable.

Back in 1916 I had seen the first shot of the war of independence in Ireland. It was an Easter Monday morning. I was walking through the centre of Dublin along the north side of Stephens Green. I saw the barricades that the Irish Volunteers had erected but thought that they only represented an elaborate game of bluff. Suddenly I heard a sharp order "Halt!" I looked around and saw a young soldier, in green uniform, standing pistol in hand. He had called to a cabby, who was driving his horse and cab along the street, to stop. The cabby looked at him, cursed, and whipped up his horse. The vol-

unteer raised his pistol, there was a sharp report, the first shot of a long war had been fired, and a cabhorse lay dead. It would be hard to conceive of a more inglorious or petty beginning to a life and death struggle between two nations, but a beginning it actually was.

The memory of the old cabhorse lying on the pavement in front of the Shelbourne Hotel, and the small pool of blood under its head, often returned to me at this time and made me speculate as to what should be the immediate occasion of the conflict which awaited me.

About this time a priest told me a story which focussed in a point many of the criticisms of my religion which were floating about in my mind. The priest told me that on one occasion he was commissioned as an expert money-getter to preach on the "Little Flower." He preached a moving sermon and made a strong appeal for support "for the shrine." After the sermon a poor woman came to see him in the sacristy. She thanked him profusely for his beautiful sermon, and told him how much it had affected her. She had come to the church with three dollars in her purse. She had intended to give one dollar "to the 'Little Flower.' " The other two dollars she had proposed to spend on the purchase of a birthday present for her sick child whose name was Mary. Mary was dying of tuberculosis. "Tomorrow she will be ten

years old, Father," she said, "but I was so touched by all you said about the 'Little Flower' and the need of having a beautiful shrine in her honour that I gave all the three dollars for the shrine. Mary will have to go without her birthday present!"

The priest went back to his room and wept with shame. He knew only too well how he and other priests had put into this poor woman's mind the ideas which distorted her judgment. He knew also, only too well, how the dollars that should have gone to make the dying child happy would ultimately be spent. I, too, when I heard the story felt sad, for I knew it was more than a particular story—it was a summary of the kind of thing that was going on unchecked all over the Catholic world in the name of religion.

While disturbing thoughts would sweep like a hurricane through my soul, bringing momentary conviction that the Church was wholly untrustworthy, the strong emotional faith of my early years would well up and I would tremble at the thought that perchance I was losing the faith. The memory of those happy mornings when by my mother's side, at the altar rail, I used to receive the body and blood of Christ brought pangs to my conscience. Then again, in calmer moments, I realized that faith was discredited, rather than justified by emotional associations, and enquired pertinently of myself, "What are your grounds for

faith?" Father Albert Houtin, the French modernist had passed through just such a crisis as I was passing through. He tells the story in his autobiography[1]: "As Bossuet says, 'Faith is the habit of believing a thing on the authority of the person who communicates it to us.' The authority of my pious mother, the authority of priests who had taught me, the authority of the abridged texts of my seminary manuals had constituted the foundation of my beliefs. Later I believed on the authority of learned liberal priests whom I saw remaining in the Church: Duchesne, Loisy, Turmel, Battifol. But for more than ten years I had submitted to verification too many old legends, too many Biblical and Patristic texts not to conclude that dogmas have their source in contradictions, interpolations and even in forgeries. I had discovered too many sceptics or hirelings among educated priests, and even in the episcopate, to remain henceforth under any illusion as to whether intelligent people could remain in the Church. My superiors and my confrères had repeated to me too often that it is not well to tell the truth. I knew what to think of the faith of Duchesne and Lejay. I was not very certain of the faith of Loisy. I saw how the Church mainted her authority and how it had been built up."

Unlike Houtin, I had not thought things out to their conclusions, nor set myself systematically to dis-

(1) *The Life of a Priest.* Watts and Co., London, p. 187.

cover the validity of important texts. I had neither the inclination nor the ability to do so. But I had gone so far as to steal furtive glances in such directions, and the more often I glanced the more disturbed I became. Was not my faith also taken from the sayings and teachings of my mother, the priest-teachers of my early and seminary days, and the unchallenged affirmations of theological manuals?

Such was my state of mind when the following letter reached me. It was from the Provincial of the New York Province, the Father Kelly who had persistently thwarted my efforts to write and lecture and work as a priest-psychologist.

Md. N. Y. Province
501 E. Fordham Road
New York, N. Y.

June 9, 1925

Dear Father Barrett,

P. C.

Father Lyons [the President of Georgetown] will not need you at Georgetown next year, and there is no chair vacant in any of our other colleges. I have informed Father Fahy [the Irish Provincial] of the fact so I expect he will recall you to the Province. I take the occasion of thanking you for your service to Georgetown and for your willingness to help the

Province, and I trust your sojourn has been pleasant to you as it has been advantageous to Georgetown.

Sincerely and gratefully in Dno.

(Signed) L. J. Kelly S. J.

There was no missing the significance of this letter. It was for me additional evidence that the Society of Jesus would never approve of my plan to make psychology an adjunct of religion, and to use it for the alleviation of those suffering from the neuroses that Catholicism caused.

I packed up at once and bade farewell to such friends as I had made at Georgetown. The same evening I reported to St. Francis Xavier's, West Sixteenth Street, where I was to stay until my departure for Ireland. I little thought at the time that it would be the last Jesuit house in which I should ever dwell. I had a duty of charity to perform while in New York, and had asked and received due permission to perform it. It was the duty of visiting a parish priest who was neurotic, and under the care of sisters in an up-state sanitarium. It was impossible to make the round trip in one day, so I was to set out one morning and return the next evening. I found the dear old man very depressed and nervous. He was suffering from a trying obsession which I did my best to alleviate. I returned in due time to St. Francis Xavier's the next evening.

Then the thing happened which, of course, was bound to happen sooner or later, but which I did not expect just then. The first shot of the war was fired. It was fired by the Superior of St. Francis Xavier's, as I believe with the approval of the provincial. When I reached the hall of the college and was making my way upstairs to my room, a servant called after me. He had instructions, he said, from the superior to inform me that there was no room for me, that I was to seek lodgings outside the house. He was an old man, an Irishman, and there were tears in his eyes as he spoke. "But are there not rooms vacant upstairs?" I asked. "Yes, Father, there are plenty of rooms vacant—but those are the superior's orders!"

CHAPTER XII

A NIGHT IN GREENWICH VILLAGE

THE great struggle that marked the turning point of my life took place in a front room, one flight up, in MacDougal Street, Greenwich Village.

The room will remain a sharp and aching memory for me as the scene of a night-long conflict between the forces that were holding me to the past and the forces that were carrying me into an entirely new life. From evening until early dawn the spiritual struggle lasted: the strength of every hope and fear of my heart was tested; the depth of every profound conviction of my mind was plumbed; and when at last matin bells began to incense the morning air with sacred chimes, there was a gap in the ranks of the Church's ministers, and a priest-idealist with tired eyes and drooping head had joined the great throng, the "profane herd," of the common toilers of the world.

The room in MacDougal Street carried in its colours and fittings the atmosphere of the Village.

Pieces of pottery of curious shapes and shades; lamps crazily designed; a grotesque manikin, and pictures that jarred and startled; a couch-cover that clashed with the rug; a priestly chasuble hung as an antique tapestry; it was just a "den," one of a thousand such that contrasted strangely with the drab religious cells in which for twenty years my every night had been passed.

From the window, looking slantwise, I could see the trees, green plots, and paths that comprised Washington Square. In the distance the fountain and noble archway were visible. To the north a red-brick house caught my eye and reminded me forcibly of my old home, Terracina. Italian children were laughing and romping in the Square; old men were reading papers picked out of rubbish tins; young Bohemians sprawled languidly on benches and talked with slow fervour to their companions; well-dressed women, old and young, drew dogs on leashes along the paths; a stout, bald-headed man sat asleep with an uncorked bottle in his hand; and at the small "crossroads" under the trees, men and women stood in groups chatting. Over the whole scene the mild summer air threw a cloak of peace.

From my window I could not see the south side of the Square nor the illuminated cross of the Judson Chapel, raised over New York's ghetto of folly to proclaim Christ's pardon and mercy to sinners.

Had I seen that cross it would only have served to remind me of the painful experience that was mine a few hours previously. Then, under the shadow of the same Christian symbol, in my own religious home, I had been told to go out upon the streets, that there was "no room" for me among my brethren. With tears in his eyes, the old Irish servant had watched my hands tightening on my satchel as the significance of the superior's message came home to me. He had called after me, as I turned on my heels to descend the stone steps of the Jesuit monastery: "I never saw a priest of God driven from the door before." But I went on unafraid though dazed, feeling in my heart the stirring of revolt, and conscious of being on the brink of a precipice.

Only those who have known what it means to cling with faith and love to profound convictions, and of a sudden to find that those convictions need immediate testing, will sense the tragedy of the situation in which I was placed. Here was I a priest, a Levite in soul and body, emotionally attached to my ordained way of life, consecrated to the service of God, yet suddenly confronted with circumstances that goaded me into rebellion.

Looking back to that night of June, I see that it was the most momentous of my whole life. It was the pinnacle of the dark tragedy of my career. That night I was faced with ghosts of the past, with harass-

ing doubts, and gloomy forebodings. But I made no sobbing appeal to heaven for pity, nor did I beat my breast in any weak outburst of sorrow. There ran a vein of grief, of deep distress through my long drawn-out reflections but my tears were few. For all I knew devils and angels may have hovered about me, warring among themselves for the possession of my soul, as the pious believe they do; but I saw no sign of any supernatural concern in my fate. There were no mysterious tappings at the windows of my heart. My conflict was fought on the battlefield of mind and memory, and victory was decisive only when reason had prevailed.

Sitting at the window I smoked as the twilight gathered. "Here is the end of it all," I said. "My dream of serving the Church till the end of my days is an idle lie. Never again shall I consecrate the sacred host, or hear a dying man's confession, or bless with anointed hand the pure brow of a child. All that is past. Here is the end of it all."

I had emptied the contents of my satchel on a couch; my Breviary caught my eye. Every day for eight years I had read my Office from its pages, always reverently at least, if not always with devotion. About three thousand times I had read it. It was the book I used to carry proudly in my hand . . . the book I used to read without shame in street-cars and railway compartments . . . the book my mother

loved to see me read. More than once when she did not know that I was watching, I had observed her take it up from a table and reverently kiss it! Would I ever read it again? I did not yet know!

Beside my Breviary on the couch lay my purple stole, the priestly symbol of my power to forgive sin. It had been made for me by a poor woman dying of cancer in the hospital where I had been chaplain. Many a heart had beaten faster on glimpsing it in the dim light of the confessional. I had used it with honour. It carried no reproach whatever for me. But now, it too had to go. I did not hate it or despise it, but it was for others to use, not for me.

Most menacing of all my possessions was my vow cross, the cross I had held tightly clasped in my hands when twenty years previously I had sworn eternal obedience to the rule of St. Ignatius. Up till now I had kept my vows faithfully but unforeseen things had happened and "the rule of my Order" no longer represented in my eyes the Divine Will. My vow cross, dear symbol though it was of a generous sacrifice made in the fervour of my youth, was now but a piece of beaten bronze in my eyes.

It was not easy to cast these sacred objects away. I reached for my Breviary and fingered it nervously. Here, among the pious pictures, was one of Our Lady of Good Counsel that my mother had given me when I

was a child. What would she think if she knew that I was parting with it? That I was abandoning the altar where she loved to see me say mass? Would it break her heart? Or would she understand? I felt she would be slow to condemn me even though she would cherish the hope that I should return to the ranks of the priesthood at a later date. At first it would be a cruel blow when she heard that her "Father Jack" was no longer officiating as a priest. Then, as actually proved to be the case, she would place all the blame on other shoulders and hold me innocent. But, was it not cruel that the Church should seek to enlist parental co-operation in compelling sons who had ceased to regard the priesthood as a divine commission, to continue in her service? Should not parents be taught to respect their children's freedom of conscience in this and all matters?

Gradually a deeper sense of the drama through which I was living came home to me. I thought of how those who were my good friends would regard me. They would think of my life as ruined . . . of my priesthood as betrayed . . . of my name as accursed . . . and they would ascribe my "failure," my "sin" to pride. "He fell through pride," they would think. "Pride is the root of all evil." And some of them would make a forecast of my future . . . crime, shame, an illness sent by God's just judgment, death—an unrepentant death in a pauper's hos-

pital—and burial in a potter's field. None of my friends would ever see my point of view—that was the saddest reflection of all! They would consider me as bad, unutterably bad, and growing still worse with the passage of years. I could be remembered only for my "sin," and even those who had once heard in my voice the divine accent of Christ, and who had followed my holy counsels, would hear from other spiritual guides that, all the while I directed them, I was "a wolf in sheep's clothing"!

I relit my pipe as I continued to gaze from the window of my new abode. In spite of the bitterness of my reflections I felt that it was good to be free. It was comforting, nay more, it was stimulating to know that no solemn-sounding bell or grim-cassocked superior would intrude on my attention to bid me attend to some monastic duty. No emissary of my Church would dare interfere with me tonight or chide me for sitting thus late at an open window. No pious interference could curb my liberty now! Was I not free even to go out of my "cell" if I so wished? To reassure myself on the point I put on my hat, unlocked the door and strolled out for a turn in Washington Square.

Soon loneliness fell upon me . . . no one to talk with . . . nowhere to go! I walked quickly knowing the danger of feeling lonely. I went towards the east side of the Square and for the first time noticed

the statue of a bearded old soldier with his hand on his half-drawn sword. I made out the name . . . Garibaldi! Strange my coming upon his statue just now! And the half-drawn sword . . . was *it* not symbolic of my present state of mind? Impulsively I stood to attention and saluted! Then, half-ashamed of what I had done, I hurried on and entered a Coffee-Pot. The proprietor thought it curious to see a clergyman about at that late hour but he said nothing. I drank a cup of coffee and walked slowly back to my room. Soon my pipe was lit again and I was seated as before on a chair by the window.

"Two years a Jesuit novice at Tullabeg . . . four years a 'philosopher' at Louvain . . . three years a teacher at Clongowes . . . four years a theologian at Milltown Park . . . then the Tertianship . . . London . . . Mungret College . . . Georgetown . . . all those years gone! Were they wasted? Twenty golden years! Poor Clarence Mangan . . . he had wasted "twenty golden years" too! Why had I not quitted the Jesuit Order long since? The memory of an afternoon came back to me when I had arrived home unexpectedly from the noviceship and my brother Joe, meeting me at the door, had thought that I had left the Order for ever. He had thrown his arms around me saying: "We won't let you go away any more!" He was a good brother. Why had I not taken the advice that was implicit in his words? Why

had I insisted on returning to the Order? What a fool I had been!

I picked up some letters that had fallen from my satchel and began to read them. One was from a penitent who had been a nurse in my hospital. I had been kind to her as far as I could for even then I knew that she was dying of tuberculosis. The letter I was reading had been written by her just before her death the previous spring. It was written with a feeble, faltering hand. It was perhaps the last letter she, poor girl, ever wrote. It read:

My Dear Father

Don't mind this scrawl my hand is so shaky. I think it must be nerves. I have not slept for ages. I am nearly dead for want of sleep. Could you tell me what to do? This is a case for you. When are you coming back? I am feeling grand again, at least much better than I did a week ago, if I could only sleep. I got your cable and all the books. You are a great friend. No part of me shakes but my hands so far. Will you tell me what I should do? I do wish you were home. That photo in the paper is not a bit like you, but they are making a great fuss about you.

Write a long letter soon. Good-bye and God bless you.

N.

Poor little Nora wrote no more. She died happy in her religion, and full of peace. The piety that upheld and comforted her to the end I had fostered . . . and I rejoiced for that fact. But . . . the thought hit me like a blow . . . why was I now abandoning that which I had given her and which had proved of so much worth in her case?

I read other letters. There were two from Paulist fathers inviting me to give a series of lectures in the Newman Club, Columbia University, and over the radio—W. L. W. L. When these good fathers heard of my revolt they would cancel these invitations. There were other letters from people who had heard me lecturing or who had read my book *The New Psychology* and who wished to consult me as a psychoanalyst. I should have to write to all of them and tell them of the whereabouts of my "office," here in Greenwich Village.

I was disturbed by hearing a loud scream followed by a shot. Heads popped out of windows. A policeman's whistle sounded. For a few minutes there was a commotion down the street; then all was quiet again. It was now long past midnight. How different my surroundings were from the peaceful harbourage of a monastery! Yet, I recalled with a sense of sadness that even within convent walls tragedies happen . . . hearts are slowly bruised and crushed . . . lives end in long-drawn sobs of despair.

My nerves were getting tense. I thought I heard a scraping noise behind me. I listened intently . . . yes! there *was* something stirring! I glanced round and caught sight of a rat scurrying into a corner. I was momentarily scared at the thought of sleeping with rats running riot in my room. My freedom was bringing penalties with it! This at least would not have happened in a monastery. Morbidly I began to think about rats . . . poisonous, venomous things to which in due time I should be compared because I had "dishonoured the cloth." The "sinner" had to be besmirched in the condemnation of the "sin." What I was doing, what I had done, would be accounted a great sin. But was it a sin? Was I a sinner? Was my mind bent on evil? If I was a sinner it was because I was about to undo all my past, to murder the "better self" that I had so long striven to create. Was I not killing the priest of my boyhood's dream? Was I not about to tear up and scatter to the wind sacred vows of my youth? What of the little lad with the serious earnest face, and hands tightly clasped behind his back, who used to walk to and fro meditating heroic things for Christ, under the hallowed walls of Clongowes? That little lad was being betrayed! He would have shed his blood rather than be found wanting in the smallest detail of a promise he made to his Lord!

One night, while still a Clongowes boy, he had

stood at the end of a long breakwater when a storm was driving a raging sea against the Wicklow coast. His face was dashed with spray and his ears deafened by the thunder of the waves, but he stood happy and unafraid with deep peace in his soul, for he saw in vision one who had calmed a storm no less furious. Jesus, radiant with light, was coming towards him from out of the darkness, calling to him. And he was yearning that his vision were substantial and that it should be right for him to dash through the waves to his Master. But now . . . that little lad was dying in the heart of a dispirited man whose shoulders were bent with futile toils, and into whose eyes the years had blown the dust of doubt.

Harrowing memories crowded my mind. I heard again the lilt of a song that my brothers used to sing to the Blessed Virgin. It was their favourite hymn and I used to join in with them, singing:

"Mother most pure, Star of the Sea,
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me!"

I wondered what Mary was thinking of me now? Were her clean hands outstretched ready to help me? Ready to lead me back? She was the kind and fair Madonna now and always. How sweet was the vision of her that still haunted my mind! I felt a need to pray . . . but the prayer had to be one that I could utter with full sincerity. So I said the "Our Father" . . . I said it in Latin as became a priest.

. . . *"Pater noster, qui est in cœlis."* It comforted me in my distress and I fell again to thinking.

I began to forecast my future. I should heal troubled minds by my art of psycho-analysis. That would be a noble ministry . . . consonant with my priesthood. I should write and lecture. Henceforth there would be no obscurantist censor to reject my writing on grounds of "holy prudence" nor would there be reproaches from narrow-minded superiors for *advanced* remarks I might make in the course of my lectures. I should be free to write and speak without the inhibition of feeling that fault-finders were lying in wait for me. No doubt I should have to work hard to make good but I trusted that an honest and comfortable livelihood would be mine and with it the opportunity of helping others. Perhaps some time it would be possible for me to travel. I longed to visit Egypt and Russia and some "savage" land where civilization had not as yet upset the simple way of living. In travel I should renew my youth and enrich my mind with many new ideas.

Still another distraction! In a house, a little farther down on the opposite side of the street, a light appeared in an upper room. There was a figure lightly clad moving about. It came to the window and then stood back a little looking towards me. I had been observed and temptation was being thrust upon me. The white arms were held out for me to see. They

suggested an attitude of expectancy. Then the girl combed her hair looking towards me all the while.

A block or two down the street there was a speak-easy whither some months before an Irish friend had brought me. It would be easy to find it and perhaps a glass of wine would hearten me now and help me fight out my conflict to the end? Men would say that it was the freedom that the speak-easy and the girl in the window represented that I had abandoned my priesthood. They would say it and believe it. But what of that? My conscience was not answerable to them. If it was for a life of indulgence that I had quitted my Order, in a few short years the trail of my career would be foul with many crimes . . . and all doubt would be set at rest. Meanwhile the light in the upper room down the street was extinguished, and I pursued my thoughts.

There came to my mind a pregnant saying of Renan: "Man makes holiness out of what he believes, as he makes beauty out of what he loves." This saying had become fixed because it applied so well to my temperament. I had loved the Church and found her beautiful: I had believed in her with all my heart and found her most holy. So, too, with the Society of Jesus. I loved it and it became glamorous in my eyes: I trusted in it, and thereupon found it divine! I had loved as an idealist loves without knowing . . . blindly. I had put faith in things that

my imagination created. My religious life had been an unconscious lie. My idealism had fostered love where there was too little beauty, and faith where there was too little truth. This then was the great mistake, the great sin of my life; to deceive myself and others by taking my beliefs and hopes and loves for realities: to starve my mind by shutting my eyes to facts.

I recalled that travelling along a country road in Ireland in the direction of Muceesh (which I proposed to climb) I once asked a poor bog-cutter if it were far to the mountain. He looked at me dreamily and shook his head. "No, sir," he said, "it's not far. But anyway, the day is long and the road is straight." He could have climbed the mountain oblivious of everything, dreaming as he went, needing only "the long day and the straight road." It was thus that I had lived my life, I had gone my way dreaming. I had reached the mountain top . . . but there on awakening, I found myself saying: "It is cold and I see nothing."

Even Greenwich Village has deserted streets when night wears on, and the last of her parked cars toots her farewell. For a spell, before alarm clocks begin to strike, there settles over it the old pale calm of the stars. At such a time, in the days that were gone, I should have stolen noiselessly to a domestic chapel and sat under the glimmering red

lamp keeping watch while Jesus slept. I felt now the need of such an outlet for my loneliness. But where could I get it? Where could I find a substitute for that mystical peace? I had been robbed of all my dreams . . . and was out in a mist groping my way . . . "It was cold and I could see nothing." Idealism in religion had brought a terrible retribution in its wake!

Then weariness hung on me like a heavy cloak and with it bitternes awakened. Were not those to blame who in my early days had taken advantage of my simplicity and urged me to follow a road that led inevitably to disillusionment? The men who by their sacred calling should have been faithful lovers of truth had deceived me. Why had I not realized that when Christ had railed against the priests and Pharisees He was issuing a warning? They had rent in twain the fair garment of Christ and undone His good work.

With "hell" and "anathemas" they terrified the timid and weak. With mailed hands they dealt out penances and excommunications. The fine gold of Christ's law they transmuted into base metal. They made His gospel repulsive and employed coercion instead of love as the principle of Evangelization. In place of mercy they used menace: in place of charity they employed espionage. They made heretics of those that withstood them, and those who adored a

more kindly God than theirs they called "worshippers of the devil." Tears came suddenly to my eyes when I recalled the humiliations and sufferings I had endured at their hands.

I stood up and looked out once again slantwise across Washington Square towards the house that had reminded me of the old home of my childhood, Terracina. A faint light shone over the doorway but all the windows were dark as pitch. I began, mechanically, to go over the supposed rooms of that house. "Charlie's room (upstairs in front), Joe's room, mother's room, my room . . . the parlour (underneath in front), the hall, the drawing-room, the anteroom, cousin Cecil's room . . . the kitchen, the pantries (in the basement), the servants' room." It was good to feel that without pain or shame I could look back steadily on the opening pages of my life's book. I turned away from the window conscious that my mind was settled at last.

I had crossed the bar and was heading out into an open sea. The forces that had kept me anchored in the harbourage of the past had given way and the forces carrying me into an utterly new life had won. Now I could lie down to rest. Now I could welcome sleep without any fear of awakening to remorse. I threw myself on the couch. The battle was over.

CHAPTER XIII

REBUILDING A SHATTERED LIFE—PART I

A JUNE morning, five summers ago, a clergyman of forty-one, slim, pale, with hair touched with grey, stepped shyly into a 'Man's Shop' on Sixth Avenue below Fourteenth Street, and bought a stand-up collar, a corn-blue tie, and a tweed cap. To the surprise of the shop assistant he proceeded to disembarrass himself of his clerical cravat and black felt hat and to array himself in his new purchases.

Leaving the shop he proceeded southwards and entering a cafeteria ordered coffee and a beef sandwich. Then, suddenly remembering that it was Friday he changed his order to fried fish. He offered money to the assistant to pay for his food but was handed a ticket and told gruffly that he should pay the cashier on leaving. He blushed and apologized. Still blushing he carried his coffee and fish to a retired corner and sat down with a sigh.

Having finished his meal he lit a cigarette and took a few letters from his pocket which he reread atten-

tively. They were letters which he would have to answer very tactfully. His hopes of securing a start in his psycho-analytic practice would depend upon getting his correspondents to call upon him in his rooms at MacDougal Street for the consultations which they sought from "Father Barrett S. J., of St. Francis Xavier's, West Sixteenth Str., N. Y. C." He thought it could be managed and replaced the letters in his pocket. Next he felt for and examined the little roll of bills which was his sole capital. Reassured in its regard he set himself to solve some pressing problems.

The first of these had to do with his laundry. "What will I do about my laundry?" he asked himself. "If I send my shirts out to be washed some Catholic will see 'Rev.' stamped upon them and will begin to talk. I suppose I must wash my own shirts and iron them! That means I must purchase soap and an iron. But what kind of soap?" He remembered vaguely that there was one kind of soap that "won't wash clothes" but couldn't recall its name. "I'm sure I'll be given the wrong kind of soap in the drug store," he thought, "but I'll have to take a chance on it. I can't very well ask for washing soap . . . it would seem so queer."

On his way back to his rooms he bought eggs, bacon, butter, milk and bread. Then he remembered that the milk and butter would become sour unless

he got ice. An Italian boy with a block of ice stood at the corner of MacDougal Street. On being asked if he delivered ice there came the welcome answer "Sure." The pale man, with the blue tie and tweed cap, proceeded to give the boy a dime and to lead the way to his apartment door. There Giuseppe dumped the ice and disappeared. Now, what was to be done with the ice? Where was it to go? A new and difficult problem for one who had never manipulated an ice-box and who did not know the purpose of the white coffer with the rather foul smell which stood in a corner. In despair he carried the ice to the bath and floated it in cold water, placing the milk and butter as close to it as possible.

The next difficulty to be met was in respect to his mail. Letters forwarded to him would be addressed to "Rev." or "Rev. Father" and he did not wish his neighbours or co-tenants to know anything about him . . . above all they must not know that he had been a priest. But they would see his letters in the hall or sticking out of his mail-box! He determined upon the sure but very troublesome expedient of being at home at the time of every delivery of mail so as to be able to snatch up his letters at once. This would be a serious inconvenience but it would have to be faced.

He proposed to dress in layman's clothes as far as possible, but of course when Catholic patients

would come he would have to be dressed in clerical garb. This meant that he would have to practise the art of quick-changing. He would, he anticipated, have to be quick enough to change from layman into cleric, to disencumber himself of his stand-up collar and blue tie, and replace them with a clerical stock, between the time of the ringing of his bell in the hall, and the knocking at his door of his Catholic patient. He longed for the time when he would be in a position to lay aside this petty subterfuge, but for the moment it seemed absolutely necessary to practise it if he were to survive.

For a few days no patients came and he threw himself into his preparations for making his entrée into American literature. He bought paper, carbon sheets, large envelopes (for manuscripts), stamps in abundance, and a second-hand Corona. The old Corona was as rickety as a three-legged table but he practised on it assiduously, and soon could get along pretty fast using only one or two fingers. Before a week was over he had his first story finished. It was a tale of a phantom cow that had followed him along the edge of a haunted bog in Ireland. He sent it to *Harper's* believing that they would appreciate fine things and pay well for them. After a brief delay he received his MS. back with a polite note to the effect that the editors regretted that they could not find space for the story, but thanked the author all the

same, etc. Next the *American Mercury* was given the opportunity of accepting the story but it, without any expression of appreciation, returned it to the author. *The Atlantic Monthly* was no less unappreciative. This was terrible! Was it a conspiracy? If the writer's work was of so little value, why was it that but a month or so previously he was inundated with requests for MSS. from Catholic editors, lay and ecclesiastical? A friend solved his doubts. He read the story and said it was "rotten"! No discouragement followed, but only renewed efforts . . . all of which failed. Then it slowly dawned on the would-be story writer that he had neither the technique, nor the experience, nor the gift of story-writing.

"I have the mind of a child still," he confessed to himself. "Because devout Catholics lauded and praised everything I wrote and said for these many years past my head is swollen. Mencken and Sidgwick and Bliven and Wells are not going to say: 'God bless you, Father! Whatever *you* write is good copy, Father,' like the editor of the *Catholic*————. I have been living in a fool's paradise surrounded by dear souls swinging censers at me, and have never had to measure my strength in competition with other men for a livelihood! I'll have to wake up and realize that the rules of the game as played among men in the world contain no pious clauses recognitory of a 'Reverend Father's' special status." But it took a long

time to learn to toe the line with other toilers, unprotestingly.

In the course of a few weeks patients began to come for consultations, and the modest roll of bills grew fatter. Soon there were a few hundred dollars and it was time to open an account at a bank. He chose the Corn Exchange Bank. The name suggested security, and there was a convenient branch nearby at Christopher Street. He had heard of American banks crashing and was not entirely free from anxiety, but knowing that absolute security was unattainable in any line, he resolved to take the risk and deposit his little hoard. He interviewed the manager, handed in his money, and departed with a bank book and a cheque book.

Then came the first of the month and a visit from the landlord. He wrote his first cheque neatly. The landlord departed content, but not more content than his tenant. That alien wayfarer in the world's ways had tasted the sweetness of a new sacrament. A subtle thrill swept through him. With money honestly earned he had secured a foothold in New York City. He had so far paid his way and demonstrated his economic independence. The sacrament was ennobling —and wholesome. Old religious sacraments had no doubt a sweet emotionalism, as when on the snow-white altar cloth, with the delicate fragrance of flowers about one, and with glimmering wax candles as

witnesses, the Sacred Host was consumed. But this new sacrament was a plain symbol of daily life, with no glamour of mysticism, yet none the less real, none the less inspiring.

While he still had the trying duty of quick-changing his collar, to avoid disedifying Catholic patients, a stroke of luck came to him in the shape of a letter from a rich Catholic lady whose sister was suffering from mental trouble. The lady enquired if it would be possible for "Dear Father Barrett" to stretch a point and to wear lay clothes when receiving visits from her sister. In her letter she said that she knew that the request was a very extraordinary one to make but owing to the strange obsession from which the patient was suffering, she could not be induced to see a priest, although only a priest-psychologist could help her.

The girl came to the "lay" analyst, as she thought, and made good progress. She had a long story of persecutions which alienated her from priests. Still she was greatly comforted to find an analyst who seemed to understand her religion intimately without being himself a priest. But she had a dream, in the course of the analysis—such a strange one! She dreamed that her analyst was all the time "a priest in disguise"! She laughed heartily over the foolishness of her dream.

To secure a steady and continual flow of patients

it would be necessary to lecture on psychology. In practice this meant that one had to sell oneself to a lecture agent. A shrewd hard-boiled lecture agent in Broadway was chosen for this attempt. "You won't get any lectures on a circular of that kind," the agent told him, on scrutinizing his list of lectures and his modest portrayal of his titles to celebrity. "You must make yourself out to be the most famous psychologist who ever mounted a lecture platform in America! Go back, write yourself up big. And look here. Get some snappy captions for your talks. What about 'The One-Track Mind in Business' instead of this 'Psychological Causes of Failure in Business'? Your caption must have punch in it!"

A few ways later the agent was reading with much satisfaction a glowing and utterly exaggerated account of the would-be lecturer's accomplishments, and a list of tentative titles each one of which suggested an exploding shell. "This will do well enough," he said. "Now let's talk business. How much are you able to put into publicity? A lot of advertising will be necessary in your case as no one knows who you are! Can you put up a thousand dollars?" As the self-styled "famous psychologist" was taken aback at the hugeness of this sum, and indeed at the proposition of financing his own publicity, the agent lowered his figure to $500. Seeing that this generous reduction was not rewarded with immediate assent,

he lowered the figure still more. But the would-be lecturer had by this grown suspicious. It was clear that anyone with a few hundred dollars could "sell himself" to this agent. So he replaced his tweed cap on his head and departed.

So far nothing had come of efforts to write or efforts to secure lectures. There remained the possibility of finding a position as a part-time teacher. Agencies were tried in vain. Then, through a friend, an introduction to a lady principal of a fashionable private school on the East Side was obtained. The lady was elderly but an ardent horsewoman, and a great admirer of all things British. Se was delighted to discuss Ascot and Epsom and the Grand National. Rotten Row was as dear to her as Central Park. After talking horses for a while, it needed no high-pressure salesmanship to convince her that the very best thing in the world for her fashionable young ladies was a course in the new psychology. She arranged forthwith for two lessons a week in psychology for the senior girls at an attractive salary.

But there were some Catholic girls in the school, and no doubt through them, the local priests or perhaps some Jesuit fathers heard that "Dr. Barrett, a former priest" was to give a course of lectures in psychology. There followed remonstrances and threats, and the lady principal's nerves gave way. The arrangements for the course were forthwith can-

celled. A letter very courteously worded announced to the would-be instructor that "it was found impossible to carry out the proposed scheme for the lectures in the new psychology."

Meanwhile Catholic patients would write or phone to the effect that they found to their astonishment that their confessors disapproved of their being psychoanalyzed by "a former priest." Some of them declared that their confessors had forbidden them "under pain of mortal sin" to continue treatment under an analyst "who had quarrelled with the Church," and who had been "expelled from his Order."

It took a little time to learn to bear in patience and even good-humouredly such disappointments and in particular repetitions of the statement that "Barrett left the Society of Jesus because the Society could not and would not tolerate him." This statement hurt very much when it was circulated in the Catholic press. It was untrue, for the Society continued for a long while by direct and indirect means to induce him to return. His own Irish Provincial (in a letter from St. Francis Xavier's, Dublin) had written: "For the sake of your Province, for your own sake, for the sake of your mother whose heart would break if she should hear of your defection *I beg you to return to us at once. Hoping and praying that you may soon be back with us,* Yours very sincerely in Christ, (signed) John Fahy S. J.' The

American Provincial of New York had sent Father W. Parsons S. J. (editor of *America*) to implore him to return, and as long as six months afterwards he received from an influential Jesuit of Georgetown University a piteous appeal: "Come, dear Boyd, I beg you on my knees to come back as a simple trusting child . . . come back to us, dear Boyd, come back to Jesus and His 'Little Society.' " The Society furthermore took one extreme, and as it proved, mistaken step in its effort to bring back its now valued lost sheep. It appealed to his mother to intervene . . . and that brave little mother's answer was to send a blessing to her son for acting as he had done!

The old Corona had been idle for some time when the thought of writing a book occurred to its owner. It seemed to him logical that he should write a psychological study of the great Order that he knew so well. Previous books about the Jesuits had been written for the most part in the old-fashioned spirit of praise or condemnation: the former, by those who were still in the Order, the latter by those who had quitted it. Other books on the subject were of questionable value as their authors had never lived the Jesuit life and were unable to give a realistic account of its effects. If a satisfactory book were ever to be written it should be the work of one who although an ex-Jesuit was impartial and at the same time equipped with a good grasp of modern psychol-

ogy.

Four prominent New York publishers were in turn approached. They were all interested and played a while with the idea. An inside book about the Jesuits, which was not to be a mere book of "revelations," but a serious psychological study, was a tempting proposition. However, the old fear of the consequences that might follow from antagonizing "the crack regiment of the Roman Church" was too strong. In the end they were unwilling to proceed. They considered that no matter how impartial such a book might be it would be interpreted by Catholics as "an attack" . . . and they knew what that would mean.

As a fifth and last resort, Mr. T. R. Smith of the then Boni & Liveright organization was approached. Mr. Smith, at once benevolent, casual and shrewd, sat at his desk and listened as the ex-Jesuit unfolded his plan. To the latter's distress Mr. Smith insisted on discussing perfectly irrelevant matters. He enquired about the Catholic renaissance in England; the alleged subservience of the British Admiralty to Roman Catholic opinion; the probable truth of current stories that related to the private life of a great American Cardinal. When, at a lull in the conversation the ex-Jesuit drew from his brief-case copies of the four books he had already written and displayed them as evidence of his experience as a writer, Mr. Smith smiled indulgently and complimented him upon his

salesmanship. A glowing tribute that Joyce Kilmer had written to one of these in the *New York Times,* and an equally cordial eulogy of another of them by Professor Spearman of London University, seemed to make some impression on the astute publisher.

At length Mr. Smith took up the tentative Table of Contents of the proposed book and put a few searching question. This reminded his examinee of the old-time *viva voce* tests, called "orals," that were made in theology, when with a thesis paper in his hand the professor glanced up and down the list of propositions to be proved and enquired: "What proof from Scripture have you of No. 8?" Apparently Mr. Smith was well satisfied by the answers he received for he allowed himself his favourite luxury, a snap decision. "I'll take your book," he said. "Try and have it for me in eight months. Write it in your own way. I have no suggestions to make. If you wish you can have advanced royalties while writing it. Come to lunch with me some day next week . . . let me see . . . Tuesday, no! . . . Wednesday . . . I'll tell you what, I'll phone you in few days." The lunch with Mr. T. R. Smith never eventuated but in due time *The Jesuit Enigma* appeared.

Later the author heard the supposed "true story" of the origin of the book. He heard that he had assiduously collected all the scandals he could find about the Jesuits, and that he had sent the good fa-

thers word that unless he was paid $10,000 he would publish them forthwith. He heard that his vile threat was treated with contempt and that only the Christian charity of the Jesuits deterred them from prosecuting him for blackmail.

Within a month or two after publication *The Jesuit Enigma* ran through four editions in this country, and two editions in England. Invitations to write and lecture poured in. The *American Mercury*, the *Forum*, and many other magazines carried articles by the author, and he gave courses of lectures on psychology for the People's Institute, the radio stations W. E. A. F. and W. P. C. H., besides delivering addresses to various clubs and societies. Patients came in increasing numbers and the doubtful privilege was accorded him of being interviewed as a "famous psychologist" in regard to the Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray case.

A not unwelcome improvement in financial conditions made it possible for him to secure a finer office, one with a small garden attached for the benefit of an addition to his household, whose story the next chapter will tell. In his new office he was enabled to bring into fuller play the technique of his art which he had been carefully developing. For him psychoanalysis was founded on a noble and optimistic philosophy. He saw in it a ministry almost sacred in character that had to do with those troubles, fears,

depressions and strange unhealthy impulses which lie in the borderland between morals and mentation. He thought it appropriate to endow his office with the quiet brightness of a hillside shrine where suffering humans would feel at least in a vague way that spiritual forces were evoked on their behalf. Far from regarding his art as hostile to religion, he saw in it rather the means of clearing away the weeds that prevented true religious sentiment from growing. Himself an incurable believer in the inner forces of nature, he found no difficulty in inspiring a hopeful and confident feeling in his patients. And since, in his philosophy, he held that creative action is curative, it was ever his object to encourage patients to develop through action their latent capacities.

Like other analysts he found the work trying and responsible. In dealing with such delicate and fine material as mental states one had to be at once sensitive and sure of touch. A single injudicious phrase might thwart a cure or delay it indefinitely. One false step might mar for ever a human's hope of health and happiness. The work he likened to the very difficult and highly specialized work of directing the spiritual life of mystics, but at the same time he regarded it as more human and more practical, and more strictly scientific.

Cases of every kind came his way, and he was presented with a thousand different cross-sections of

modern city life. It saddened him to see so much suffering, so much reckless selfishness, so much distressing tension and unrest. "These New Yorkers," he said to himself, "are a generous impulsive people, but they have few settled convictions, and they are woefully lacking in a sane philosophy of life." And so, it came to be part of the final stage of his treatment to put such folks as could adapt themselves to it, on the way to a finer and nobler culture. What guarantee could there be of the permanence of their new-won mental freedom unless they possessed themselves of a culture that would reinforce it?

His office hours brought him from day to day many strange contacts. Sometimes there were moments of an exciting nature, as when a new-comer would confess to homicidal or suicidal tendencies, and manifest symptoms of a sudden seizure. Dreamy-looking girls would call, only to be sent away again at once, when they declared their desire to be hypnotized. Men who believed they had discovered the "secret of the mind" would come to "talk business" about a scheme for recreating human nature. New-thoughters and faddists of every shade of creed would likewise drop in to discuss some fanciful theory, and so the routine of analysis work was broken in various ways.

Meanwhile on his mantelpiece the bust of an inscrutable Egyptian maiden kept watch. Often he glanced at her wondering how she appraised the wis-

dom of the advice he gave or the method he pursued in treating his patients. Were there the same crazy impulses, the same depressing fears in Egypt long ago? How did the wise old medicine men of those times deal with obsessions, the inferiority complex, and *folie de doute?* Were there Freudians, and Adlers, and Jungs then? Or was the sole therapy employed religious faith-healing? The noble princess whom the bust represented might herself have known secrets of mental healing that modern psychology has so far failed to rediscover.

CHAPTER XIV

REBUILDING A SHATTERED LIFE—PART II

MEANWHILE there had come into his life a playmate, a gay little friend, to fight by his side, and help him settle down anew. He was just the kind of companion that one grown grey in sophisticated ways needed. He stood for the elfish element in life, the carefree and the daring. He stood too for loyalty and fidelity, and set up a sentimental barrier that kept his master from becoming overabsorbed in professional work and controversy.

Kruger was (and *is*, for his five summers have not lessened one whit his vitality!) a Blue Terrier. In his warm-hearted, impetuous way he plunged headlong into his master's life, pushed a cool moist nuzzle into his hand, and soon was exercising a mild (and welcome) tyranny over him. Full of self-assertion and insistency, he declared for walks in the park, rough and tumble games indoors, a place beside his master at table and *constant companionship*. He was at his master's side all day whether he worked or rested,

and was never tired of glancing up at him in a funny affectionate way.

Kruger, with his frisky gait and perky glance, was the kind of terrier that made truckmen whistle and grin, as they watched him from the high seats of their cars. He never failed to light into a smile the wan features of tired factory girls as he passed them on the streets far downtown. "Say, Boss! You've a dog there" or "Aye! There's a Kerry Blue" were the remarks his master was constantly hearing, and it made him feel proud and glad. Kruger was not by nature a thief, though once he stole half an uncooked ham. He was not usually "dangerous," even if he allowed himself on one dreadful occasion to seize a clergyman spitefully by the back of the pants. He was vindictive only in respect of cats whom he chased with fury every time he saw them on *his* garden wall. But he was all the time adventurous, and once when an opportunity presented itself he staged a tremendous foray in Central Park.

That day, walking with his master around the reservoir, he scented a pheasant among the bushes. He plunged so hard that he broke his leash and like a shot was after his prey. He tore in front of a cavalcade of horse-riders, chased the bird through the motor traffic, and followed it as it ran and flew through thickets and brushwood. Soon he was lost to sight and his master, pertrified by fear lest anything should

happen to him, pursued in turn. Passers-by all had seen the wild chase but could only indicate its general direction. At last Kruger was found many blocks away nosing around in a thicket very much puzzled over the sudden disappearance of the pheasant which had swooped over the park wall. With his usual effrontery he turned to his master panting and laughing. He did not even "ground his buttocks" which was customary with him when he anticipated a spanking. He just looked up roguishly and flicked his tail about as if to say: "What a time I had! Gad! It was great!"

Kruger had to spend many weary hours listening to the tiny barks of his master's typewriter as it slowly spelled out the pages of *While Peter Sleeps.* This simple and frank critique of present-day Catholicism followed as a natural corollary to *The Jesuit Enigma.* It appealed to American Catholics to formulate demands for the reform of the Church. It had at once a wide circulation but unfortunately it excited bitter reflections in the minds of Ultramontanes. Liberal and thoughtful Catholics regarded it as perfectly fair and moderate. It went no farther than amplifying Cardinal Newman's dictum: "The Church is ever ailing and lingers on in weakness." Nevertheless, in the eyes of militant Catholics it stood for wickedness and unpardonable folly in the author to write such a book. There was hardly a Catholic paper in the coun-

try but called out shame upon him though no Catholic questioned the accuracy and veracity of the statements he made. Some high ecclesiastics, notably a monsignor of Brooklyn, New York, a good devoted pastor, thought it right to warn the faithful against the author. His article appeared in the Christmas number of his parish paper, *The Nativity Mentor* (1929). It read:

A WOULD-BE MARTYR

We call him "A Would-be Martyr." We wish we could think of something bad enough to call him—a name which would convey an adequate idea of his badness and bitterness. . . . We find ourselves wishing that Barrett's decent old mother had been as perverted as he is or that she had believed in Birth Control . . . she would have kept out of life one creature who is nigh unto a curse. . . . His [Barrett's] unhappy spirit was no doubt fertile soil for the pernicious thoughts and wild desires that have brought him into a morass where he wallows in slime surrounded by serpents. He must lead a wretched life. He knows he is wrong but he is too proud to admit it. He tries to find balm for his conscience in company which loathes him and in an occupation which may be remunerative but for which no priest is adapted. . . . When a man leaves his Order as Barrett left the Jesuits and devotes his abundant time and meagre abil-

ity to the task of biting the hand that fed him and befouling the nest that sheltered him, then decency as well as religion disowns him. . . . Even the devil despises him though he is glad to use him!

Though neither *While Peter Sleeps* nor its author was condemned in any *official* ecclesiastical manner, the multiplicity and earnestness of such criticisms made it only too clear that the administration of the Roman Catholic Church was utterly opposed to the idea of reform. The book, though a modest and sober plea for better things and purer doctrines, failed to effect its purpose. Yet, curiously enough, at the very time it was being written Cardinal Mercier, in his Malines meetings with Lord Halifax, was promising on behalf of Rome that Anglican Catholics would be allowed to organize Catholicism in England according to the lines of the plan that *While Peter Sleeps* advocated.

The severity of such attacks as that of the Brooklyn monsignor brought in its train contacts with men who stood openly and boldly for fair play and free speech, men who were less influenced by invectives than by reason. He met many fine radical spirits, courteous in controversy, philosophical in outlook, humane in temperament, men who embodied the true American principle of religious freedom and social justice. As an American himself, when he had at

last received the splendid sacrament of citizenship, he cordially endorsed the fine aphorisms of Everett Dean Martin[1]: "Tolerance of the freedom of speech is the real test of a people's love of liberty. . . . Freedom of speech is the liberty on which all other liberties depend." Though he never abandoned his own beloved Catholicism, he met prominent Freemasons, Freethinkers, Socialists and propagandists of various "isms," many of whom had fallen foul of the Church and had incurred her reproaches.

It seemed to him to be infinitely sad that there should be so much bitterness, so much hate bound up in the spreading and explaining of religious truth. Good Americans, excellent citizens, estimable characters, were arrayed against one another, exchanging words of recrimination and poison—all in the cause of Christianity! What purpose did so much engendered ill-will serve? The horror of religious hate came home to him dramatically on New Year's Eve, 1928, when like the rest of New Yorkers he sat waiting the outburst of chimes and bells and sirens that was to fling up to the stars a welcome to 1929. He sat in meditative mood at a window overlooking his little garden, with Kruger's head resting on his knee, watching the smoke curl upward from his pipe, and grateful to God for the many blessings of the year that had almost passed. Precisely at midnight the telephone

(1) *Liberty* by Everett Dean Martin, p. 197 (Norton publ.)

bell rang. He hastened to the receiver. "Is that Dr. Boyd Barrett?" a voice enquired. On hearing "Yes!" the voice continued, "Well, I want to wish you, with all my heart, every kind of bad luck and ill fortune during the coming year!" The click of a receiver hung up at the other end sounded . . . and at the same moment the bells and chimes and sirens burst on the air wishing joy and good will to all!

As the result of his writings and lectures he had many contacts with former Catholic clergymen. They came to his office to smoke and chat and tell their stories. For the most part they were men who cherished no animosity against the Church, nor harboured any desire to air grievances. On the other hand, one and all of them had suffered much from the hatred which pursues in after-life the priest who resigns from the ministry.

One of them, a quiet cultured man, told that on leaving his diocese he had come to New York City looking for work. He presented himself to a firm which at the time was ninety per cent Protestant and obtained a position. He occupied this post for thirteen years and his salary had been raised several times on account of his good work. Then a Catholic was appointed head of his department. Before three weeks pased he was forced to resign. His "secret" had been found out by the new manager, and from that discovery to dismissal was only a matter of time.

Another ex-priest told how seeking a job he had offered himself as salesman in a Broadway store. He was asked to make a sales speech and did so well that he was employed on the spot. Then the manager in a friendly way asked him about himself. The poor fellow made the mistake of confiding to the manager, who was a Catholic, the fact that he was an ex-priest. Before he knew what was happening this ruthless champion of the Church caught him by the collar of the coat and flung him out on the street.

As might be expected the mail brought many letters to "Father Barrett"; some abusive, some commendatory, and some making appeals to him to repent. Almost every day such letters arrived. Even since this chapter was begun, a few hours ago, there is one from a nun who signs herself "A Sister." It is gentler and much more Christian in tone than the usual letters of well-wishers, and will bear quotation —not, however, the abusive cutting from a prominent Catholic paper which the poor nun, in spite of her transparent goodness of heart, could not refrain from enclosing. The letter runs:

Dear Father Barrett:

Such notices as the enclosed grieve those who have known you in the honoured past. What a pity to sacrifice the life of grace for an act of humility to make things right in your spiritual status. May the

passion of Our Dear Lord during these precious days of Holy Week work in your soul a return to the God who gave you life, strength and the power to say Mass for so many years. We all need to pray often for the grace of perseverance. A Dominican called at our Convent a short while ago begging for alms. He has only recently left his Order. I was privileged to hear him give the Three Hours. After thirty years in the priesthood, this is now his life. His excuse for not returning is that he cannot stand the humiliation—his choice is that of a tramp! God help us! Who knows what will be his end? My prayers for you daily. Some day perhaps you will come back. God bless you.

A Sister

To this letter he would have replied as follows had he known A Sister's address. Perhaps through the pages of this book the reply will reach her and she may write again!

Dear Sister:

I thank you for your kind and gentle letter, and in particular for your prayers and blessing. I know that the advice your words convey is well meant, but Dear Sister, is it good advice? Do you realize how different your spirit is from that of the writer of the article you sent me in which my friend Mr. Charles

C. Marshall and I are *grouped* with a thief and a prostitute because of our writings?

Yours is the "religious mind" . . . Christ's spirit lives in you: his is the "ecclesiastical mind" . . . the legal, pharisaical spirit . . . which is infuriated against those who think for themselves. It is because your kind of mind, the religious mind, counts for almost nothing in the Church, while the ecclesiastical mind has control of everything, that I cannot accept your suggestion that I ought to come back. Were I to come back and submit to the ecclesiastical mind I should be quenching the light divine in my soul and denying Christ. That at least, Dear Sister, is how I look on the matter. But do not you be disturbed! Live on good and happy in your dream that all is well with the Church!

Sincerely,

A Brother

If the mail brought trying letters it also brought letters that were a source of immense joy and comfort. They usually came with the forenoon delivery. Kruger would run to the door, sniff and bark, as though he knew instinctively that his master was getting a letter from Dublin. Then while the letter was being read he would recline like a lion on guard watching with bright searching eyes.

It was the same mother who years ago used to

carry a basket of jam tarts, sandwiches, and fruit along the East Pier in Dunlaoghaire when she knew her sons were hungry and tired from fishing on the rocks, that still would bring to her son now far away all the comfort she could. While fanatical Catholics called his writings "vile vituperations," she, a hundred times a better Catholic than they, delighted to read them because they were written by her boy in whom she believed. But on serious things she seldom touched in her letters. Always they were gay and bright and newsy. Enquiries about Kruger, tales about her own pet Gatieto, clippings from papers carrying amusing stories (such as one that related how G. K. Chesterton stood up in a streetcar and "gave his seat to three ladies") and expressions of solicitude as regards health and work. But never a word of advice! Never the expression of a wish—save only once in a long, long while a faintly murmured longing that she might see her "Father Jack" again.

So passed a few years since the "Night in Greenwich Village" when "a priest with tired eyes, and drooping head, had joined the great throng, the 'profane herd,' of common men and women who make up the toilers of the world." He had through dint of effort secured his economic independence. He had, besides, discovered interests and ambitions that were worth while, and had found strength and peace

of soul such as he had not enjoyed since his early boyhood. At times, of course, he yearned for the sweet and easy pasturage of former days and shrank from the stench of vulgarity and vice that haunts city life. . . . The child within him wept with impatience at the noise and brutality of his surroundings. In weak moments he longed for the dreamy Arcadia of his native land, as he pictured quiet river banks where grass and trees are unsullied by smoke, and where the dim music of bees and the drone of the water against the sedge lulls one's nerves. He thought with hunger in his soul of sleepy Irish villages, where geese wander at will, and cows have the right of way in traffic, and where barefooted boys lean against doorposts whistling and cutting sticks with knives.

CHAPTER XV

MY CREDO

A MAN'S philosophy, a man's religion—is it not the sum of his ways? A man lives his philosophy, his likes and dislikes, his true opinions, his credo. He may perhaps, should he reflect on his conduct, disapprove of what he has done, or of what he is doing, and contradict the opinions that he translates into acts. Such afterthoughts are but epiphenomena. It is in the things that he does, in the way he spends his days, that the story of his philosophy is written.

The philosophy that is mine I study as I would that of another. It lies before me in the speed and eddies of this stream of life. As the years go by the stream runs more smoothly and follows a simpler course. I find myself, when the glare of day is mellowing, following a quiet path with Kruger at my heels. When it is my good fortune to see flowers or a sunset or to hear the song of a bird, I rest content, absorbing all the beauty and peace I can derive from the experience. After nightfall my pipe is lit and a

book is in my hands or on my knees. If I happen on some passage finely wrought or containing a great thought, I read it over slowly once again. I catch myself at times looking round with pride on the little corner of the world that is mine. It represents for me the freedom I have won. When it is my lot to be among fellowmen, there is no one that I fear to look in the face. Such enemies as I have are those who do not know me . . . nor I them! When voices grow loud and tense and faces flush I draw away, ever jealous of the calm that brothers my retired life. To such as turn to me for aid I feel myself indebted, for it is they most of all who strengthen my faith in the worthwhileness of living, the purpose of life.

Through my office window I see folk pass hurriedly along the street. Their faces are strained and their feet beat the dull pavement impatiently. And yet it is a quiet street—why are they for ever hurrying? Once in a while a man walks calmly by with his head bent in meditation. I have seen him pass on a fine evening reading a book. Then my thoughts fly back to early monastic days when I used to watch with envy an old father who read his Breviary as he pased to and fro with an expression of great peace in his face.

Sometimes in this office a cry issues from the lips of patients: "Doctor, I find I can't be my-

self! There is something which prevents me!" "But how can you be yourself," I reply, "when you are so strained—always in flight or in pursuit?" Hurrying all day long, for ever hurrying, men and women lose themselves, and having lost themselves they will not "come apart and rest a little" so as to find themselves again.

Once in a while a breath of calm comes in from the street when old Antonio wheels up his organ. Ancient airs float outwards and around hauntingly then. "Coming through the Rye" . . . "I dreamt I dwelt in Tara's Halls" . . . and "Sweet Rosie O'Grady" of the Dublin Pantomime. I close my eyes and feel the restfulness of sitting a long day in the sun watching a cricket game—for the same airs belonged to those days. Meanwhile Antonio holds his hat low in his left hand while he grinds away with his right and smiles enticingly "Thank you," "Thank you" to passers-by.

A few days ago, when at long last mid-April gave a grudging promise of spring, I sat a while in the park near Beth Israel. Men were lounging on benches gazing wistfully at the sky waiting—for the sun—and for whatever the day might bring. They were tired-looking, disappointed men, and their clothes were shabby. Kruger sprang up beside me, looked around enquiringly, and remained still. I was in no hurry and I too began to wait. It was

good to feel time pass slowly, to feel aloof from the swift current of city's life, and to partake of the sombre peace that these poor wayfarers were enjoying. The restfulness of a quiet, gloomy church was about the Park.

Then a curious thing happened in my mind. The words "waiting for the coming of the Lord" took shape and I began to apply them. Were these men unconsciously waiting for God? If He came would they be content? The priest in me was awakened and a silent sermon welled up. "My dear brethren [to the men on the benches], you are tired, disappointed, unhappy. You are in need of something. You are yearning—your hearts are yearning for God. If God was in your hearts everything would be different; you would be happy again. And, my dear brethren, you can find God if only you open your eyes . . . He is in the sparrows on the branches of that tree, in the grass that is sprouting in that plot. Your desire that the sun may break through that dull, grey sky is nothing else than your unconscious effort to break into the knowledge and love of God."

My sermon stopped short. I realized how utterly meaningless it would appear to hungry, tired men. The God they needed just now was the sun with its warmth—and bread. Besides I recalled the letter the nun had written me about her friend, the Do-

minican priest, who was a hobo. Perhaps he was seated on these benches before me.

How *he* would smile at my sermon! Maybe he would interrupt and cry out: "Give me food, warmth, and a place to rest and you will satisfy *my* hunger for God. While I am tired and cold and weak from want of food, the only hunger I know is a bodily hunger!"

And anent finding God in the sparrows and in the grass, perhaps one of these poor loungers would answer me that mind can find whatever it dreams of (as Burns did his Jean) in flowers and birds.

"I see thee in the dewy flowers,
I see thee sweet and fair.
I hear thee in the tunfu' birds,
I hear thee charm the air.
There's not a bonny flower that spring
By fountain, shaw or green,
There's not a bonny bird, that sings,
But minds me of my Jean."

The thought that had come to me in Stuyvesant Park was the outcome of hearing and reading of renewed interest in religion and of reawakening preoccupation about the future life. It was also the outcome of reflections suggested by queries put me. Only a short time previously there had come to me over the phone the question: "Dr. Barrett, do you think there is a hereafter?" I had answered reas-

suringly and encouragingly, and then had set myself to think anew over the old problem.

The position of the Church was perfectly clear. The Church taught dogmatically that there was a hereafter—*but.* Always a "but"! The spokesmen of the Church while *proclaiming* the credo—"I believe—in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting"—live for the most part as though they do not set much stock upon it. They cling to life while calling it a shadow and a valley of tears. They hate death and distrust it while calling it the gate of heaven. They glory in the flesh-pots of Egypt and like cats lap up cream, purr softly, blink wisely, and coil themselves on soft mats to sleep.

Meanwhile some philosophers, Carlyle, for instance, say bluntly that the answer to such deep questions must be deciphered from what is written in mysterious letters over the face of nature. Nature herself will give the answer if she is read aright. "We speak of the volume of Nature," says Carlyle, "and truly a volume it is—whose author and writer is God. To read it—dost thou—does man so much as know the alphabet thereof? With its words, sentences, and grand descriptive pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through our solar systems . . . It is a volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true sacred writing of which even the prophets are happy when they can read a line here or a line there."

The phone brings me other queries bearing more directly on religion. "Dr. Barrett, do you suppose that one should be affiliated to a definite creed? May one be saved outside 'the one true Church' ?"

My Church answers such questions dogmatically. "Outside the Church there is no salvation"; no one can be saved unless he belong to the one fold of Christ. But with the growth of reaction against severity of doctrine, the Church has developed and enlarged the idea of "baptism of desire" and it now appears as though every good man (who is "in good faith") can be considered as belonging to the fold of Christ. Goodness is taken as "baptism of desire." Bob Ingersoll, whose tablet nearby in Gramercy Park tells us truly that "he knew no fear except that of doing wrong," was a good man and so through "baptism of desire" affiliated to the one true Church. Dr. Dietrich's hero, he who "stands on his own feet like a man and looks fair and square at life; seeing the world as it really is, its beauty and its ugliness, and unafraid of it *does the good he craves*," is, we suppose, also baptized by desire into the Church. Everything then seems to depend upon leading a good life and being "in good faith."

But—again there is a *but*—the Church does not in practice set so much store upon good faith. I recall, by way of illustration, an incident that happened in the largest seminary of the world, Maynooth College.

The seminarists had determined to "rag" a certain dean who had made himself very unpopular by his severity. He was usually in charge of the refectory during meal-time and so they determined to stage the ragging there. After grace was said, the dean as was his custom commenced to walk up the refectory. All at once the students who were behind him began to stamp their feet, and to rattle their spoons against glasses. The dean turned and walked towards the noise-makers. As soon as he did so, those now behind him took up the ragging while those in front kept still. But not all of them. There was one student who considered it dishonourable to rag the dean behind his back. This student only tramped his feet and rattled his glass when the dean's eyes were upon him!

The matter was reported to the president and he called a council of his advisers. All were priests and theologians. The only student against whom there was proof of guilt was he who ragged in front of the dean. So the president and council expelled this boy, the only one who was both honest and courageous, the only boy who was obviously "in good faith," and they retained the rest to be ordained priests. To be in good faith, therefore, seemed a matter of small account in the eyes of the Church's representatives.

Ignatius Loyola, the great spiritual guide, under

whom I received my training, devised a very practical test of one's good faith. It is outlined in the Spiritual Exercises, in the rules bearing on the "election." One is taught to envisage one's own death, and while bearing in mind that one is presently to be judged by the all-seeing eye of God, to ask oneself "Is all well?" "Am I ready to die?" and such-like questions.

It was during my last summer vacation (1929) that I subjected myself to Loyola's test of "good faith." I was in Cape Cod at the time, and one afternoon, July 10, a very terrible electric storm burst over the district. It was afterwards described in local papers as the worst lightning storm that Cape Cod had seen for years. Houses were struck close to mine, and there were fatalities and serious accidents.

Since my schoolboy experience of the thunderbolt that struck Clongowes during the intermediate examinations, I had been nervous during electric storms, and in my days in the Jesuit Order I used to interpret each flash as a signal that death was nigh at hand. I would then pray fast and furious and make "acts of contrition" while the thunder roared. And in this way nervous tension and fear became for me the inevitable accompaniment of lightning.

However, on July 10 (1929), I found myself quite unafraid. Crash came the thunder again and again. There were blinding flashes to the right and left

and all around my frail little cottage. Once when flash and crash came almost together my poor Kruger shivered and howled, sensing imminent danger. But my nerves remained calm and my mind was at peace. "What of death now?" I asked myself. "Have you done right? Are you in good faith?" And the answer came. "Yes! I have done right! I am in good faith!"

Some time later I put myself to a test of my own inventing; a test no less searching, though perhaps more artificial than the one just described. I paid a visit to a church in which I had often said mass. I sat in a pew close to the altar rails where I had distributed communion to the faithful. I closed my eyes and reconstructed the past as vividly as I could. I went back in memory and reawakened all my tenderest feelings of piety. I felt myself once again drinking the chalice of the Body and Blood of Christ. I heard myself again pronouncing the words of absolution over sinners. I stood once more before little children about to make their first communions and addressed to them words of counsel. I even saw in vision my dear mother kneeling behind me with bowed head as I uttered the words of consecration—yet when amid all these tender and beautiful associations I asked myself suddenly: "Have you done right? Are you in good faith?" the answer came: "Yes! I have done right. . . . I am in good

faith!"

If it be possible to epitomize a great store of wisdom in two words that task has been achieved in the adage: "Be Yourself." This advice is none the less hard to follow. There are robbers ever at hand to filch from men their philosophy, their own way of living, and so to make them other than they should be—to prevent them from *being themselves.*

I too, like others, might have been robbed of myself long since had I not learned—after leaving the Jesuit Order—the art of saying nay and meaning it. There were friends—well-intentioned robbers—who were for ever begging me to meet people. "You must come to my place," they would say, "and meet some very interesting people!" But I learned to excuse myself, saying either that "I never go out" or that "I should like to come *but* there was my dog, Kruger, and I had not the heart to leave him alone—something might happen to him." There were others, no less friendly and no less robber-minded, who pressed me to make myself available as a spiritual guide—to take up again the ministry in a Christian church—and since it appeared that my own Church would not welcome me back to her pulpits, why not occupy a pulpit in some other church? Again I said nay and meant it. And when it was pointed out that there were substantial inducements over and above the good I should do by "making myself available as

a spiritual guide," I repeated my nay with added emphasis. I wanted "to be myself," to enjoy to the full my liberty of choosing independently "the good I craved to do." Had I followed everyone's advice, or accepted everyone's invitations, I should very soon have lost myself.

The authors I like most to read are such writers as Rolvaag, George Moore, and James Joyce for they portray in a realistic way instances of manners, and morals, and religion—the subjects in which I am most of all interested. Such authors too seem conscious, as I myself am, of the competition in the race for the prize of beauty, between these three competitors *manners*, *morals*, and *religion*.

I was touched recently by the inherent beauty of manners when, on St. Patrick's day last, a pretty little girl rang my office bell. She was nine years old and her name was Sheila. She was dressed all in white save for a green muslin scarf around her waist. When I opened the door she curtsied and handed me a tiny box tied up in green and gold ribbon. "My mother," said the smiling colleen, "heard you preaching in Irish in the Newry Cathedral on a St. Patrick's day, long ago, and . . . and . . . Here poor Sheila blushed and confessed she had forgotten the rest of her mother's message. Then she bowed again and smiled sweetly and was gone. I opened the box and it contained a sprig of shamrock and a

card with a kindly greeting in Gaelic.

Though I was touched by the beauty inherent in this *rencontre* with Sheila, I found there was still more of the æsthetic quality in an experience with an American lad called Abe which had to do with morals rather than manners. Abe hailed from Virginia. He was a tall scrawny boy, who used to carry my parcel from the laundry. He always called me "Doc" and greeted me in the breezy, bold way that new-comers to this country find so charming. Well, Abe wanted to try his luck at aviation, and determined to go to Dayton, Ohio. He had saved a little but not enough for the journey and he asked me one day to help him out. "Doc, you can count upon it," he said, "I'll make good whatever you lend me in a year or so at latest." And he did. He called in at my office about eighteen months after and paid his debt in full. He was well dressed and very satisfied with a job he had in an aeroplane factory. "You know, Doc," he said, "if I wasn't as good as my word, and didn't do the right thing, I wouldn't feel that life was worth living." His handshake, when he was leaving, had something of the staunchness of his morals, and I began to think that moral beauty was the *ne plus ultra.*

But then there occurred an experience which showed that religion could compete with manners and morals in the race for the crown of beauty. A

lady came to see me, a wonderful woman, a Roman Catholic whose whole life was devoted to the cause of religion. She was a daily communicant and had just returned from her third pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Her very presence was a fragrance, so calm, and fine and broad was her mind. She was eighty-five years of age but no older than the budding branches of a great oak. I had never seen her before but she had known me through *The Jesuit Enigma.* "I have read and reread it," she said, "and for hours I have wept over it. Though my best friends are the Jesuits, I could feel and see God's presence in your book. No day passes but I pray for you." Then she handed me a beautiful ivory cross that she had procured in Jerusalem, and carried to Rome to be blessed for me by the Holy Father. Impulsively I kissed the little emblem, deeply moved by the loveliness of this woman's religious spirit. She was a brave and bright old soldier of the Church but she knew how to translate her religion into the language of beauty.

Would that religion were always attired in radiant beauty, so as to inspire, rather than discourage, the finest manners and the purest morals! There were times, no doubt, when religion was the soul mate of chivalry and the dynamic of right living, but the day came, as Lord Acton tells us, when it began to propagate "austere immorality." It ceased to be a

lovely, gentle thing and it taught men to persecute, ostracize and torture one another. If today there be religious folk who are fine and noble in their ways, it is at the expense of discarding some of the bulwarks of their religion. We Catholics have to forget the teaching of our Popes that "one is not bound to keep faith with a heretic" in order that we may conduct ourselves as gentlemen in a Protestant country. One may well wonder, seeing the colossal failure of organized religions, whether they are not part and parcel of effete civilization. One may well desire that organization, should it be inescapable in religion, may in future times be communal rather than autocratic and centralized.

On Christmas Eve last (1929) late in the evening I made my way to Madison Square to hear the carols sung. In spite of the cold and dampness a large crowd had assembled. In the centre of the park a huge Christmas tree was erected and on it a myriad of red and yellow bulbs hung. Near by an illuminated message read: "Peace on earth: good will to all men." A thin layer of snow lay on the grass-plots, discoloured and velvet-brown in the glare of lights. Citadels of business, the high offices to the north and east overshadowed the meeting, while the austere monument to the war dead stood as a grim reminder of the reality of hate. But the softened voices of women singing "Holy Night" and the dimmed eyes

of elderly men, who stood erect and patient in the stirring throng, lent religious emotion to the scene.

Some indefinable impulse urged me to take my place with the plain people of the city who gather on such occasions to make an act of faith in the great Being in whose hands their destinies lie. I felt what I think was the common feeling of all present that it was good to worship in public according to the simple ritual of the great religion of mankind. In the temper of the gathering there was a certain seriousness which, however, implied no constraint. Not as a challenge to unbelievers, but as a symbol to represent common sentiment, "All Glory to God on high" was sung. While externally it was a Christian meeting it did not seem inconsistent that Jews and Orientals should be present. They too could see in the birth of Christ the Prophet a manifestation of the interest of the Great Spirit in this little planet. It was good to see plain folk of many creeds, united under the stars, standing together among bare trees and patches of snow, coming and going as they pleased, without constraint, as birds might gather in a quiet valley. There was complete freedom and yet there was perfect order. One could smoke in this wide temple without irreverence, or laugh and chat without exciting a reproving frown. Girls were there leaning on the arms of their boys and whispering to them the while they worshipped. Just to be present, to listen,

to sing, to make one of the great throng was to worship. My eyes were opened to the beauty and reasonableness of this simple, non-credal ceremony, and for the first time it came home to me vividly to what an extent organized religions had erected barriers between God and man!

Then my thoughts turned to Rome with its ornate pageantry. A few days previously I had read an account of the Pope's Golden Mass in St. Peter's. How utterly different it was from this simple "mass" of the plain toilers of the world! The Pope, robed in a cream-coloured silk cloak embroidered with silver and gold, wearing on his head the triple crown, and on his finger the precious "fisherman's ring," had been carried into the basilica on his *sedia gestatoria* high over the heads of the cheering applauding people. Two rows of Cardinals in ceremonial robes preceded him. Bishops and abbots, officials of his high court in many-hued doublets of Knights of the Cape and Sword, together with Swiss Guards in orange and red uniforms, with breastplates of steel and plumed helmets, marched also in front. One bishop carried a "spear-headed cross," while attendants carried fans of ostrich feathers. Silver bugles heralded his coming, and halberds rattled against steel.

"The silver bugles rang across the dome,
The people knelt upon the ground with awe,

And borne upon the necks of men I saw
Like some great God, the Holy Lord of Rome.
Priest-like he wore a robe more white than foam,
And King-like swathed himself in royal red,
Three crowns of gold rose high upon his head
In splendour and in light the Pope passed home.
My heart stole back across wide wastes of
years,
To One who wandered by a lonely sea,
And sought in vain for any place of rest.
'I, only I, must wander wearily,
And bruise my feet and drink wine salt with
tears.'"

—Oscar Wilde

As I walked home from Madison Square I tried to imagine what would happen were Christ to come among his people in New York? Would the Christian churches combine to welcome him? Would they gather humble and silent in His presence to hear His message? Would they allow Him to come and go as He pleased and to say what He thought fit to say? If He went to St. John the Divine's would no suggestions be pressed upon Him, no hints dropped? If He wished to take the pulpit in St. Patrick's would not a few words be whispered to Him beforehand? A few words of warning—as to what topics to avoid? "Dear Master," some old monsignor would say to

Him, "you may not realize the scandal it would cause were you to allude to certain trifling abuses—the buying of papal titles—the 'Little Flower' racket—and such things. Our 'enemies' would make undue capital out of it! And if you touch on politics please remember we expect Mr. S. and Mr. R. to be present. It would be well to meet them and the B.....s and the MacD.....s after your sermon. *They are great supporters of the Church!* Of course only the very nicest people will be in the cathedral to hear you as admission is exclusively by ticket. And, dear Master, do not be offended if I remind you *to genuflect to yourself* when you are passing before the tabernacle, otherwise some of our people will be shocked." Perhaps, of course, Christ would be given a free hand to do and say what He wished, but I doubt it—and I believe that there would be many sighs of relief among the more prudent Christian churchmen when He departed from the city.

My heart has not outgrown the idealism that filled it as a Clongowes boy. I still look for a religion that is untarnished by worldliness and unafraid of the searchlight of reason. I still look for one that can arise from the tomb, resplendent like the Lord, having left behind the cerements of simony and ceremonialism. But I have no confidence in the Church as it exists at present, for it obstinately refuses to arise from the dead. In sorrow and despair I repeat with

Professor Harry Elmer Barnes: "What is needed today in the religious field is a wrecking machine that will clear the ground of the archaic intellectual and institutional debris which has been accumulating for more than fifty thousand years."[1]

I think of Christ now, not in terms of His gentleness and mercy but in terms of His ruthless honesty and courage. I think of Him as being as hostile as ever to hypocrisy, cruelty, and formalism. I see Christ at His best when He whipped the Pharisees with words of scorn, when in a splendid outburst of rage He drove traffickers from the Temple, and when with consummate irony He mocked at the hidden sins of the self-righteous.

Courage and honesty—the two fine traits that I find symbolized in my faithful dog—the two fruits that grow on the tree of freedom—the two virtues that the Church tries to blindfold are more needed than devotion to ritual or self-pitying penance and prayer. Without these virtues religion is sterile and "believers" are spiritually asleep. As long as priests and bishops keep their followers in the servitude of fear, warning them against independent thinking, they are robbing them of the perfection to which they have a God-given right. Is not the deepest purpose of man's existence the exercise of his freedom "to do the good he craves to do"? And does there not be-

[1] *The Twilight of Christianity*, p. 460.

long to each one the inalienable right to live "his own good life" and resist all sentences dooming him to inanition however holily they be formulated?

If among the organized religions of the universe there be none to satisfy fully the moral sense—none that in the highest degree consecrates honesty and courage, and fosters human progress—none that proves in practice to be a reliable emetic for the poison of fear—then, we await the day when ripe philosophy will ignite a divine fire in the mind of man. As Nature has given us science to interpret faithfully her secrets, and art for a magic wand to make her form beautiful in our eyes and ears, she, the true Light-bearer, will in time awaken in us that splendour of vision, that substance of hope, that golden gate which holy books call Heaven.

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